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# **Usability Testing of the U.S. Navy Performance Management System: Technical Report #1**

Submitted to:

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## 1 Introduction

The U.S. Department of the Navy has a number of challenges in facilitating a high level of military readiness. Currently, operational commanders and policymakers examine ratings on the Status of Training and Resources System (SORTS) as a readiness metric. SORTS generally consists of three primary military readiness factors—manning levels, equipment and supplies, and completed training evolutions. Clearly, Sailor retention and training play key roles in developing and maintaining military readiness.

The Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) chartered the Executive Review of Navy Training (2001), which subsequently led to the formation of a Task Force for Excellence through Commitment to Education and Learning (EXCEL). Task Force EXCEL's goal was to identify new ways for the U.S. Navy to train, grow, place, and utilize personnel who maximize the Navy's ability to accomplish its military mission while developing a more productive yet satisfying workplace.

Task Force EXCEL consists of five components or "*vectors*" that are essential to how personnel meet their missions and manage the Navy workforce. These five vectors include Professional Development, Personal Development, Professional Military Education and Leadership, Certifications and Qualifications, and Performance. The primary tasking of the Performance Vector includes an examination of the Navy performance appraisal and management system.

One challenge for the Performance Vector was the need for a performance appraisal and management system that is aligned with the changing workplace performance needs of the U.S. Navy. Since 1996, the Navy has operated with a trait-based performance appraisal system, where supervisors have rated personnel on traits such as leadership, teamwork, equal opportunity, and

military bearing/character (BUPERSINST 1600.10, 1995). One recommendation from initial Task Force EXCEL meetings was a behaviorally based performance appraisal system.

Additionally, after examining military and civilian best practices in performance appraisal and management, and learning of the CNO's desire for an electronically based performance management/appraisal system, the Performance Vector recommended the development of a behaviorally based performance appraisal system.

As the Commander, Navy Personnel Command (CNPC) develops a new performance management and appraisal system, it is confronted with having to develop performance appraisal systems that are fully operational and integrated with the performance evaluation and promotion selection cycle. As the new Human Performance Feedback and Development (HPFD) performance management and appraisal system is implemented, the final performance appraisal forms as formatted and presented in the PeopleSoft 8.8 (2004) application require usability testing with supervisory and non-supervisory Navy personnel to identify usability concerns and improve the functionality of the electronically based performance management and appraisal system. Usability testing is a vital step in the development of any new Web-based tool. In theory, the automated tool should reduce the burden on users; in practice, however, such tools can be more difficult to figure out than their paper counterparts. Usability testing can assess the time it takes to complete a form, the amount of self-editing required, and the navigational problems users face. It can also assess users' emotive reactions to instruments. Identifying sources of burden and reducing the causes of user stress result in a more efficient Web-based system.

This technical report summarizes the findings of a data collection effort designed to assist the CNPC Task Force EXCEL HPFD project manager in collecting and analyzing usability data,

identifying relevant user issues, and developing recommendations as they relate to automated human performance measurement and management of the Navy's human capital.

## 2 Usability Testing Literature Review

A succinct definition of usability testing is found in Dumas and Redish's (1993) popular handbook, *A Practical Guide to Usability Testing*. The authors note that usability testing's primary goal is to improve the usability of the product. Specific goals and concerns are articulated when planning each test. For example, for the usability testing of the Navy's Web-based performance management tool, a specific goal was to assess the different usability needs for supervisors and non-supervisors, as well as for shipboard and non-shipboard Sailors. In a usability test, the following four key factors must be present:

- The participants represent real users.
- The participants do real tasks.
- The usability researcher observes and records what participants do and say.
- The usability researcher analyzes the data, diagnoses the problems, and recommends changes to fix the problems (Dumas & Redish, 1999).

Nielsen (1993, p. 165) describes usability testing as “the most fundamental usability method” and “irreplaceable” because it's the only mechanism that allows the researcher to obtain direct, detailed information on the users' experience with the product or tool being tested

Usability researchers agree that multiple methodologies can be used to effectively assess the user experience. In fact, most usability test plans include several types of data collection. Methods used include baseline tests of existing products to assess pre-existing problems, surveys of user needs, focus groups with users, participatory design experiences, heuristic evaluations, task analysis, and paper prototyping. Among all the usability assessment practices that are



employed, the two most consistently emphasized are an iterative design and the consideration of the user context.

## **2.1 Iterative Design**

In a survey of usability researchers, Nielsen (1993) identified the top six methods for usability improvement. Iterative design (tied with task analysis) was number one on his list. There are several reasons why iterative design of usability tests is so important. Changes to a system as a result of usability testing sometimes do not solve the problem. In fact, new solutions may create new problems. Furthermore, new solutions may reveal additional problems that were previously hidden or outbalanced by the original problem identified. Nielsen's research analyzing the effectiveness of iterative testing found a median improvement in system usability, defined by the various usability metrics used for the particular test plan, of 38 percent per iteration. While five out of 12 iterations in Nielsen's analysis showed that one dimension of usability had gotten worse, significant improvements in usability continued to be made in later iterations (i.e., iterations 10, 11, and 12).

In the early days of usability testing (the 1970s and 1980s), the norm was one large-scale test of 30 users, conducted very late in the design process when most of the design features were stabilized (and thus averse to change). The problem with this approach was that it found pervasive system problems, but at a stage in the development cycle where it was too late to fix them. In addition, 30 users were not needed to identify such large and pervasive problems. The solution adopted was to test earlier prototypes of systems, even using paper prototypes when necessary, with multiple iterations of five to 10 users. This approach allows the identification of large-scale systemic problems early on. Since 1990, iterative testing with small samples has been the preferred approach (Dolan & Dumas, 1999).

## **2.2 Context Awareness**

Valid usability measurement cannot take place outside the user's context, and usable systems require incorporating this context into the development cycle. When considering tools such as guidelines and checklists for user-centered design, Bevan and Macleod (1994) warn against dependence on checklists, because guidelines for usable system features need extensive detail to be useful, but if they are detailed enough, they are likely to be too specific to apply in multiple real-world contexts. For example, a highly interactive Web-based performance management evaluation form that requires frequent communication with a server to complete may be desirable in an office setting because it will allow the user's data to be saved through many interruptions. Conversely, this may not be desirable on board a deployed Navy ship, since the satellite Internet connection may be unavailable or regularly interrupted. The solution is to conduct assessments with real-life users in a true-to-life environment. A true-to-life environment can be replicated in a lab setting, but the most realistic setting is in the field itself, by conducting on-site usability testing. Bevan and Macleod add a fifth factor to Dumas and Redish's list above: The participant's real-life context is represented in the usability test.

This evaluation of the Navy's Web-based performance management system incorporated these two key design features of iterative testing and context awareness. Usability tests were conducted at three very different Navy installations with time between iterations to make changes to the system.

### **3 Study Objectives**

The objectives for this study were to capture both quantitative and objective data as well as qualitative and subjective data from participants to identify potential sources of error and user burden. Specifically, the objectives of this study were to

- Conduct usability tests on the HPFD system with non-supervisory Navy personnel collecting data on the type and frequency of user errors, user reactions to the system, and self-reported user satisfaction with the system;
- Conduct usability tests on the HPFD and ePerformance systems with supervisory Navy personnel collecting data on the type and frequency of user errors, user reactions to the systems, and self-reported user satisfaction with the systems; and
- Conduct focus group interviews among non-supervisory and supervisory personnel who completed HPFD and ePerformance usability tests to identify features that users liked or features that need to be improved.

All research instruments and procedures, including participant informed consent forms for both the usability testing and focus group interviews were reviewed and approved by the research team's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Participants were briefed on the purpose of the study and were asked to read and sign the informed consent form and to return the form to their respective task leaders. No adverse events occurred during the course of this study.

## **4 Participants**

A local, on-site liaison was identified by the project manager to assist in participant recruiting, scheduling, and study logistics. Instructions were sent to the on-site liaison that described the criteria for selecting potential participants—supervisory and non-supervisory personnel assigned to operational and shore commands or units, ranging in paygrade from E2 through O6.

### **4.1 Iteration 1: Naval Air Station (NAS) Brunswick**

Iteration 1 took place at NAS Brunswick in Brunswick, Maine, from June 21, 2004, through June 25, 2004. A total of 21 active duty Navy personnel took part in data collection. All 21 personnel participated in the usability testing and completed the pre- and post-test usability surveys. Of the 21 personnel, 14 were supervisors, and seven were in non-supervisory roles. Ten participants were NAS Brunswick personnel, ten were squadron personnel, and one participant was from a ship pre-commissioning unit. Only one of these personnel could not participate in the subsequent focus group interview.

### **4.2 Iteration 2: USS KITTY HAWK (CV63)**

Iteration 2 took place aboard the USS KITTY HAWK (CV63) in Yokosuka, Japan, from July 12, 2004, through July 16, 2004. A total of 20 active duty Navy personnel were scheduled to part in data collection. Seventeen personnel participated in the usability testing and completed the pre- and post-test usability surveys. One participant could not be tested because the online system was unavailable, and another participant could not be tested because the ship's T1 line was disconnected to switch over to a satellite Internet connection. A third participant could not make the usability session because shipboard duties created a scheduling conflict. Of the 20 personnel, 14 were supervisors, and six were in non-supervisory roles. Seven were officers, and

13 were enlisted. Participants were from the following departments: six from the Air Department, five from Air Intermediate Maintenance Department (AIMD), four from the Operations Department, two from the Combat Systems Department, one from Executive Officer Administration, one from Supply, and one from Weapons.

Sixteen of the usability participants took part in focus group interviews, and four were unavailable for the focus group session. Two Navy personnel recruited for the usability portion of the study who were not able to complete at least some portion of the usability test were excused from focus group interviews. Two additional personnel did not participate in focus group interviews because shipboard duties created a scheduling conflict.

#### **4.3 Iteration 3: Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor**

Iteration 3 took place in the Trident Training Facility at Kitsap Naval Base in Bangor, Washington, from August 9, 2004, through August 13, 2004. A total of 20 active duty Navy personnel were scheduled to take part in data collection. Nineteen personnel participated in the usability testing and completed the pre- and post-test usability surveys. Of the 19 personnel, 10 were supervisors, and nine were in non-supervisory roles. All Navy personnel were enlisted Sailors. Participants were from the following commands: six from the USS ALABAMA (SSBN 731), six from the USS ALASKA (SSBN 732), one from the USS NEVADA (SSBN 733), four from the USS KENTUCKY (SSBN737), one from Commander Submarine Squadron Nineteen (CSS-19), and one from Commander Submarine Squadron Seventeen (CSS-17).

Thirteen usability participants took part in focus group interviews, and seven participants did not participate in focus group interviews due to scheduling conflicts. Of the 13 participating personnel, six were supervisors, and seven were in non-supervisory roles. All Navy personnel were enlisted Sailors. Participants were from the following commands: five from the USS

ALABAMA (SSBN 731), four from the USS ALASKA (SSBN 732), one from the USS NEVADA (SSBN 733), one from the USS KENTUCKY (SSBN737), one from Commander Submarine Squadron Nineteen (CSS-19), and one from Commander Submarine Squadron Seventeen (CSS-17).

## 5 Instruments and Procedures

### 5.1 Usability scenarios

Usability scenarios were developed to evaluate the effectiveness of screen layouts, performance appraisal item structures, and on-screen features for the Navy's HPFD and ePerformance systems. Specifically, usability testing protocol and scenarios targeted the following potential problems:

- *Unclear navigational instructions.* Are respondents able to tell where on the screen to start reading and where to supply the required information?
- *Confusing help text.* Is help text consistently displayed within the documents, and does the help text answer the users' most common questions?
- *Meaningless or off-putting error messages.* Are error messages appropriately displayed when problems occur? Do respondents find the error messages informative and helpful rather than alarming and off-putting?
- *Problems of accessing/responding via the Web.* What is the most efficient Web tool design for the least capable information technology (IT) platform and least advanced hardware and software?

Additionally, test scenarios were developed to simulate actual tasks that Navy non-supervisors and supervisors are likely to encounter.

In an effort to test the HPFD and ePerformance systems in the field, this research study utilized a portable usability lab—a coordinated system of digital audio and video data capture equipment. The portable usability lab features professional grade video monitoring and recording

capabilities including two high-resolution video cameras with silent remote control pan, tilt, zoom, and focus.

Following the best practices in usability testing described above, an iterative approach with three separate rounds of usability testing and focus group interviews was used. In order to obtain the perspectives and assess the experiences of the diverse Navy workforce, it was important to include participants from a variety of work environments in a variety of geographic locations. As a result, our research plan included usability testing among Sailors in a variety of warfare communities (i.e., surface, submarine, and aviation communities) in an Atlantic Fleet (i.e., NAS Brunswick), Pacific Fleet (Naval Base Kitsap – Bangor), and overseas (USS KITTY HAWK [CV63]—Yokosuka, Japan) locations.

## **5.2 Usability survey**

Two paper-and-pencil self-administered surveys—pre-test and post-test surveys—were developed to obtain Navy personnel’s subjective impressions of the HPFD and ePerformance systems. The objective of the participant survey was to obtain data on users’ subjective reactions to the Web-based tool and assess ease of use, professional value, personal value, and overall satisfaction with the Navy’s new performance appraisal/management tool.

The pre-test survey included items related to participant demographics (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity, education, paygrade, and time on active duty), frequency of computer use both at home and at work, prior experience with PeopleSoft software, satisfaction with the current performance appraisal process, satisfaction with advancement/promotion process, and perceived difficulty with the HPFD and ePerformance systems prior to use. Items assessing satisfaction with the current performance appraisal process and satisfaction with the advancement/promotion process were adapted from the 2000 Navy-wide Personnel Survey (Olmsted & Underhill, 2003).



The post-test survey asked participants to report several aspects related to completing the tasks in the usability portion of this study. Specifically, items asked about perceived comfort completing the tasks, perceptions about how successful participants were in completing the tasks, ease of use compared to other systems, overall perceived ease of use, how difficult the system was to understand, perceived appearance of the system, perceived efficiency of the system, acclimation or gradual improvement of use while using the system, satisfaction with the current performance appraisal process, satisfaction with the advancement/promotion process, and overall satisfaction with the pilot HPFD and ePerformance systems.

### **5.3 Focus group guide and questions**

Focus group interviews were conducted as a means of identifying features of the HPFD or ePerformance systems that users liked or features that needed to be improved. Following the conventions and best practices of conducting focus group interviews (Edmunds, 1999; Morgan, 1997; Krueger, 2003), homogeneous groups of six to 10 participants were scheduled and interviewed in a private on-site room. Groups consisted of personnel with similar performance appraisal/management responsibilities and work environments (e.g., supervisory/non-supervisory, ship/shore).

The focus group interview questions were developed to capture qualitative information from usability test participants. Questions centered on aspects of the usability testing process—logging onto the system, opening the test document, using the system (HPFD, ePerformance, or both HPFD and ePerformance), and closing the document. A final question asked for a summary rating of the system participants used, reasons for that rating, and what might be done to improve their rating.

Focus group interviews were conducted with Navy supervisors and non-supervisors in three iterations at three separate base locations. Initially, focus group interviews were scheduled to consist of heterogeneous group members—supervisory personnel and non-supervisory personnel—since supervisory personnel completed both an HPFD and ePerformance document, and non-supervisory personnel completed only the HPFD document. Occasionally, due to scheduling challenges, the base recruiting liaison was not able to schedule heterogeneous groups. Additionally, due to hardware and software problems, some usability testing participants were limited in the test applications they were able to complete. As a result, some questions pertained to only a portion of participants in several groups, but data were collected from participants for those portions of the usability test that they completed.

## 6 Results

### 6.1 Survey Data

Demographic data from the user surveys appear in *Table 1*. Results are presented overall and are also divided among supervisory and non-supervisory personnel. Study participants were between the ages of 18 and 44, with the non-supervisors between 18 and 34 years of age and the supervisors between the ages of 25 and 44. Most participants (about 77 percent) were enlisted Sailors in the paygrades of E2-E9. Thirteen participants were officers. There were no warrant officers in the pre-test. Eighty-nine percent of the participants were male, with only slight variance between supervisors and non-supervisors. Racial backgrounds were only slightly different between non-supervisors and supervisors, as well. Also, 80 percent of supervisor participants were white, and 68% of non-supervisor participants were white.

Not surprisingly, the clearest demographic distinctions between supervisory and non-supervisory participants were in educational background and years in the Navy. About 50 percent of the non-supervisors had only a high school diploma or an equivalent degree, compared to 20 percent of the supervisors. A majority of non-supervisors participating in the tests had been in the Navy five years or fewer. Supervisors, on the other hand, had mostly been in the Navy for 10 years or more. Overall, the demographic data show no major surprises.

In addition to demographic data, the pre-test and post-test surveys collected other information expected to relate to the users' perceptions of the Web-based performance management system. Questions addressed topics such as the participants' experiences using computers and their overall impressions of the test version of Web-based tool. The survey results show that almost all Sailors used a computer frequently both at home and at work. *Table 2* shows

**Table 1. Demographic Data from Pretest Survey**

	Overall		Non-Supervisory Personnel		Supervisory Personnel	
	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N
<b>Age</b>						
18-24	21.05	12	45.45	10	5.71	2
25-34	43.86	25	45.45	10	42.86	15
35-44	31.58	18	9.09	2	45.71	16
45-54	3.51	2	0	0	5.71	2
55+	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Paygrade</b>						
E2 - E3	12.28	7	31.82	7	0	0
E4 - E6	36.84	21	63.64	14	20	7
E7 - E9	28.07	16	4.55	1	42.86	15
W1 - W4	0	0	0	0	0	0
O1 - O3	12.28	7	0	0	20	7
O4 - O6	10.53	6	0	0	17.14	6
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	89.54	51	90.91	20	88.57	31
Female	10.46	6	9.09	2	11.43	4
<b>Ethnic Origin<sup>1</sup></b>						
American Indian or Alaska Native	5.26	3	9.09	2	2.86	1
Asian (e.g., Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, etc.)	1.75	1	0	0	2.86	1
Black or African-American	10.53	6	18.18	4	5.71	2
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (e.g., Samoan, Guamanian, Chamorro, etc.)	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	75.44	43	68.18	15	80	28
Other	8.77	5	18.18	4	2.86	1
<b>Hispanic Ethnicity</b>						
Hispanic	7.02	4	13.64	3	2.86	1
Not Hispanic	92.98	53	86.36	19	97.14	34
<b>Educational Background</b>						
Less than high school completed/no diploma	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alternate degree, GED, home study, or adult-school certification	5.36	3	9.09	2	2.86	1
High school graduate/diploma	23.63	15	40.91	9	17.14	6
Some college, no degree	33.33	19	45.45	10	31.43	11
Associate's degree or other two-year degree (A.A., A.S., etc.)	1.53	6	4.55	1	14.29	5
Bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S., etc.)	21.05	12	0	0	34.29	12
Master's degree (M.A., M.S., M.B.A., etc.)	1.75	1	0	0	2.86	1
Doctoral or professional degree (J.D., Ph.D., D.Ph., M.D., etc.)	1.75	1	0	0	2.86	1
<b>Number of Years in the Navy</b>						
Less than 1 Year	3.51	2	9.09	2	0	0
1-5 Years	31.58	18	59.09	13	14.29	5
5-10 Years	8.77	5	9.09	2	8.57	3
10-15 Years	28.07	16	18.18	4	34.29	12
More than 15 Years	28.07	16	4.55	1	42.86	15

<sup>1</sup> Note that the total count for this variable is above 57, the number of participants who completed the usability survey. Ethnic origin is a "mark all that apply" question and some users selected multiple answers.

that about 85 percent of participants said that they either used a computer at work every day, or that most of their work was done on a computer. Furthermore, at home, about 37 percent used a computer every day, and another 58 percent used a computer sometimes. Discrepancies exist between supervisors and non-supervisors. About 32 percent of non-supervisors reported using a computer at work only sometimes or never, compared to only three percent of supervisors. Nine percent of non-supervisors never used a computer at home, compared to three percent of supervisors. Based on these demographics, non-supervisors, who were more likely to be computer novices, might be expected to have more problems using the Web-based performance management system.

**Table 2. Computer Use at Home and at Work**

How often do you use a computer...	Overall		Non-Supervisory Personnel		Supervisory Personnel	
	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N
<b>...at work?</b>						
Never	1.75	1	4.55	1	0.00	0
Sometimes, but not every day	12.28	7	27.27	6	2.86	1
Every day, but not all day	42.11	24	36.36	8	45.71	16
Most of my work is on a computer	43.86	25	31.82	7	51.43	18
<b>...at home?</b>						
Never	5.26	3	9.09	2	2.86	1
Sometimes, but not every day	57.89	33	50.00	11	62.86	22
I use a computer every day.	36.84	21	40.91	9	34.29	12

When participants' perceptions of overall ease of using the Web-based system are considered, supervisors and non-supervisors appear to have had somewhat similar impressions, with more non-supervisors having difficulty with the system. *Table 3* shows their responses to the question, "Overall, how easy or difficult was the system to use?" About three percent of supervisors said it was very difficult to use, and about 12 percent of supervisors said it was somewhat difficult to use. Among non-supervisors, none reported that it was very difficult to

use, but 33 percent said it was somewhat difficult. About nine percent of supervisors and non-supervisors reported that the system was very easy to use.

**Table 3. Overall Ease of Using the System**

Easy or difficult to Use the System?	Overall		Supervisory		Non-Supervisory	
	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N
Very Difficult to Use	1.82	1	2.94	1	0.00	0
Somewhat Difficult to Use	20.00	11	11.76	4	33.33	7
Neither Difficult nor Easy to Use	18.18	10	20.59	7	14.29	3
Somewhat Easy to Use	50.91	28	55.88	19	42.86	9
Very Easy to Use	9.09	5	8.82	3	9.52	2

In addition to these questions, the participants answered a series of questions about their perceptions of the fairness and accuracy of the current EVAL/FITREP system as well as the test version of the Web-based system. The overall results and results for supervisors and non-supervisors for all questions in both the pre-test and post-test surveys are detailed in *Appendix A*.

## 6.2 Usability Data

In this section, we present the results of the usability testing along two dimensions: the time it took to complete specific tasks and the number and types of problems that were observed while users were completing specific scenarios. For the usability testing, we developed one set of scenarios for supervisors and a second set of scenarios for non-supervisors. Supervisors were asked to complete the HPFD session as well as the ePerformance appraisal document. Non-supervisors were asked to complete only the HPFD session. *Table 4* presents the durations for completing each task for non-supervisors and supervisors.

Several observations are apparent when examining the duration data presented in *Table 4*. First of all, as expected, the tutorial task took the most time. On average, it took non-supervisors 22 minutes and 12 seconds, and it took supervisors 28 minutes and 24 seconds. The supervisors took longer because they were asked to complete one additional section in the

**Table 4. Durations for Completing Usability Tasks**

No.                      Task		Non-Supervisor			Supervisor		
		Avg	Min	Max	Avg	Min	Max
HPFD Tasks							
1	Complete the CBT Tutorial.	0:22:12	0:02:46	0:42:13	0:28:24	0:02:09	0:44:25
2	Log in to NSIPS.	0:03:51	0:01:07	0:27:14	0:01:52	0:00:23	0:20:32
3	Open the HPFD document.	0:02:40	0:00:47	0:09:55	0:04:58	0:00:42	0:07:33
4	Complete the HPFD document.	0:12:22	0:02:44	0:25:41	0:11:04	0:02:55	0:26:40
5	Check spelling.	0:01:23	0:00:04	0:02:55	0:01:33	0:00:05	0:06:10
6	Find the “Target Behaviors” description.	0:01:22	0:00:13	0:02:22	0:00:59	0:00:11	0:01:28
7	Change ratings and cut and paste comments.	0:01:36	0:00:37	0:03:19	0:01:34	0:00:24	0:04:53
8	Collapse all sections of the document.	0:00:47	0:00:05	0:01:43	0:00:40	0:00:10	0:01:27
9	Submit the HPFD document.	0:00:43	0:00:05	0:01:43	0:01:24	0:00:11	0:07:13
10	Enter a performance note.	0:02:28	0:00:47	0:06:12	0:01:17	0:00:37	0:08:11
ePerformance Tasks							
11	Log out of PeopleSoft.	-	-	-	0:00:15	0:00:11	0:00:18
12	Log into NSIPS using the ePerformance test account (System Administrator account).	-	-	-	0:01:23	0:00:44	0:02:25
13	Open the Annual Performance Appraisal 1 document.	-	-	-	0:04:22	0:01:58	0:08:10
14	Complete the Annual Performance Appraisal 1 document.	-	-	-	0:10:34	0:03:29	0:16:02
15	Check the ratings descriptions for one dimension.	-	-	-	0:00:45	0:00:15	0:01:06
16	Check spelling.	-	-	-	0:00:47	0:00:11	0:02:05
17	Check language.	-	-	-	0:00:39	0:00:07	0:01:09
18	Calculate ratings.	-	-	-	0:00:42	0:00:05	0:03:46
19	Submit the Annual Performance Appraisal 1 document.	-	-	-	0:05:06	0:00:11	0:12:53

tutorial, describing manager functions. Second, other than the tutorial, there are no discernible differences between the durations for non-supervisors and for supervisors. In general, the average, minimum, and maximum times for completing tasks within the HPFD session are similar across the two groups. Third, the table shows some extremely long durations for completing some of the tasks. Some examples are listed below.

- It took 27 minutes and 14 seconds for one non-supervisor to log into NSIPS.
- The maximum lengths of time for opening the HPFD document were 9 minutes and 55 seconds for non-supervisors and 7 minutes and 33 seconds for supervisors.
- One supervisor's completed HPFD document took 7 minutes and 13 seconds to submit.
- One supervisor's completed ePerformance Appraisal took 12 minutes and 53 seconds to submit.

These extremely long durations for completing some very simple, one-step tasks are likely the result of server and connectivity problems. Further analysis in Technical Report #2 will indicate whether these long durations were observed more frequently at one of the sites (such as on the USS KITTY HAWK [CV63], where connectivity seemed to be the slowest). These durations demonstrate how fairly uncomplicated problems such as a connectivity interruption can indiscriminately affect the user's experience in completing documents in NSIPS. The additional coding of usability problems, detailed below, will provide more information as to the details of users' experience. The analysis of usability errors in each of the tasks presents a different picture of the users' experiences with the test scenarios. Whereas the timing estimates present a picture of the overall burdens users faced, such as extremely long durations when attempting to log into



NSIPS, the usability errors allow an understanding of specifically what kinds of problems caused those burdens.

**Table 5** displays the count of problem incidents for Task 1, completing the CBT tutorial on HPFD. In the action memos submitted after each data collection iteration, it was noted that while users completing the tutorial appeared to read most of the text on the screens, they did not generally complete the interactive portions of the tutorial. On many screens, it appeared difficult for users to see where they were being asked to enter data or click buttons within the tutorial screens. This observation is supported by the usability errors analysis. The greatest problem observed was that users did not follow screen instructions. This happened 125 times for non-supervisors and 170 times for supervisors. When it happened for non-supervisors, it happened about 18 times per session, and when it happened for supervisors, it happened about 24 times per session. This error incident rate is very high. None of the other tasks completed in all of the usability testing featured this many problems. The best likely explanation for this is that the tutorial was a long task.

**Table 5. Task 1: Complete the CBT Tutorial**

Problem Category	Non-Supervisors		Supervisors	
	Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions	Average Number of Incidents Per Session	Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions	Average Number of Incidents Per Session
User does not follow screen instructions	125	17.8	170	24.2
Tutorial button error	16	5.33	42	6
User asks for help	3	1.5	1	1
Navigational error	1	1	0	0

As displayed in **Table 4** above, it took non-supervisors an average of 22 minutes and supervisors an average of 28 minutes to complete the tutorial. The longer the task, the more opportunity a user has for error. This observation likely explains the higher rate of problem

incidents for supervisors. Supervisors experienced a higher number of total problems and a higher average number of incidents per session because they spent an average of 6 minutes longer completing the “Manager Functions” section of the tutorial. In general, *Table 5* shows that the other problems that occurred during the tutorial were fairly minor. Users did make errors clicking on the buttons unique to the tutorial. The lack of clarity as to which parts of the tutorial were interactive and which were not likely contributed to these errors as well.

For Task 2, users were asked to log into NSIPS using their new account, created for the purpose of the usability testing. *Table 6* displays the problem categories and incidents for Task 2. The primary problem observed with this task was setting the new NSIPS password. Upon logging in the first time, users were required to change their password to meet specific criteria of eight characters with at least two numbers and at least one capitalized letter. Users were not given instructions on the password requirements until after they tried a specific password and failed. Across all sessions, problems setting the new password occurred a total of 37 times. It happened more frequently (21 times vs. 16 times) for non-supervisors than for supervisors. Note

**Table 6. Task 2: Log into NSIPS**

Problem Category	Non-Supervisors		Supervisors	
	Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions	Average Number of Incidents Per Session	Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions	Average Number of Incidents Per Session
User is not able to set new password.	21	3	16	2.28
User asks for help	7	1.16	11	1.57
System or server error	7	2.33	7	1.4
User refers to QRG	3	3	1	1
Navigational error	2	2	0	0
User is timed out	1	1	0	0
User retries action because the system did not react the first time.	1	1	0	0

that when this problem occurred, it occurred about three times per session for non-supervisors and about two times per session for supervisors.

Additional problems were observed with logging into NSIPS. Users asked for help relatively frequently (compared to other tasks). Non-supervisors asked for help seven times, and supervisors asked for help eleven times. Two other problems occurring with this task were similar: the system or server error and the timing out error. The system or server error happened seven times each for non-supervisors and supervisors. This error was recognizable by extreme slowness in the connection speed. The system or server error problem was coded when the screen did not respond or continually showed a partially complete loading bar at the bottom of the screen. The timing out error, on the other hand, happened only once for Task 2. Timing out was observed when the user was returned to the login screen. This error was observed more frequently in the HPFD document when the user would click on a button that led to a screen saying, “This page/document is currently unavailable.” In general, the system or server error is attributable to slow connection speed or server down time, whereas the timing out error is attributable to the PeopleSoft settings.

Several other problems or behaviors were observed at a minor level when completing Task 2. These included use of the QRG, navigational errors, and retrying an action because the system failed to react the first time. Users tended to retry actions when they faced a system or server problem. Overall, more problems were observed among non-supervisors than supervisors.

Task 3, opening the HPFD document, was the first task users were asked to complete within the PeopleSoft performance management system. The most significant problems users experienced were navigational errors while attempting to find the location of the HPFD document. Participants had trouble identifying the correct path (Employee Self-Service –

Performance Management – Performance Documents) from the range of options available to them in the left-side menu. **Table 7** shows that this happened more for non-supervisors (25 times) than for supervisors (19 times). Also noteworthy in **Table 7** is the extensive use of the QRG. Both non-supervisors and supervisors used it, at a rate of 21 times and 14 times, respectively. On average, non-supervisors who consulted the QRG used it three times. Supervisors who consulted the QRG used it two times on average. In addition to using the QRG, test participants also asked for help.

**Table 7. Task 3: Open the HPFD document**

Problem Category	Non-Supervisors		Supervisors	
	Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions	Average Number of Incidents Per Session	Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions	Average Number of Incidents Per Session
Navigational error	25	3.57	19	2.71
User refers to QRG	21	3	14	2
User asks for help	8	1.14	7	1.4
System or server error	6	1	7	1.16
User retries action because the system did not react the first time.	5	1.66	1	1
User is timed out	0	0	2	1
User searches outside HPFD session	1	1	1	1
General button error	1	1	0	0

Other problems occurred less frequently when users attempted to open the HPFD document. These included system or server errors, retrying actions due to inactivity, searching for documents outside the HPFD session (such as in the Microsoft Internet Explorer menus or on the Internet), and a general button error.

After opening the HPFD document in Task 3, users were required by Task 4 to complete the HPFD form. This task focused solely on entering ratings and comments. Subsequent tasks required users to use specific functions in the HPFD document, including the spelling check and

the collapse all sections features. **Table 8** shows that the most common problem situations were the use of the QRG and the user asking for help. Consistent with the previous two tasks, both of these problems occurred more frequently for non-supervisors than supervisors. The QRG was used 22 times among non-supervisors but only six times among supervisors, with non-supervisors asking for help eleven times.

**Table 8. Task 4: Complete the HPFD document**

Problem Category	Non-Supervisors		Supervisors	
	Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions	Average Number of Incidents Per Session	Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions	Average Number of Incidents Per Session
User refers to QRG	22	3.14	6	2
User asks for help	11	1.83	9	1.8
General button error	6	1.2	2	1
User is timed out	4	1	5	2.5
Navigational error	7	2.33	1	1
System or server error	2	1	0	0
User retries action because the system did not react the first time.	3	1.5	0	0
User searches outside HPFD session	2	2	1	1

Completing the HPFD document was typically also a longer task. **Table 4** above shows that it took non-supervisors about 12 minutes and supervisors about 11 minutes on average to complete. This longer duration likely contributes to the greater diversity of problems with relatively high incidence rates observed for Task 4. Users also exhibited general button errors and navigational errors and had timing out problems and system or server problems. In a few instances, users attempted to retry failed actions and searched outside the HPFD session.

The next five tasks (Tasks 5–9) required the users to complete very specific brief tasks within the HPFD document, including checking the spelling, finding the target behaviors description, changing ratings and comments, collapsing all sections of the HPFD document, and

submitting the HPFD document. The details of the problem occurrences for these tasks can be found in *Appendix B*, but in general, fewer incidents occurred. The most frequent and significant problem was timing out. Users experienced timing out problems with all five of these tasks, and for all but one of them, it was the most frequent problem faced, according to the counts from the usability data. In most cases, the user was timed out of the HPFD session while they were working in Task 4, completing the HPFD document. Then when they attempted to do the remaining tasks within the document, they were unable to complete them due to the timing out problem. It is noteworthy that in most cases, the HPFD document completion times for users did not appear to be extraordinarily long. In fact, since they were aware they were in a test environment, most users felt comfortable taking shortcuts such as copying and pasting text, or writing informal appraisals of their performance. We expect that the actual completion times for the HPFD session may be even longer when it is used in real performance evaluations.

Task 10, entering a performance note, was the final task in the HPFD session. This task represented only the second time users were asked to search within PeopleSoft for a particular document. As in Task 3, the predominant problems are navigational errors and the need to refer to the QRG. *Table 9* displays the results in detail. Among non-supervisors, there were 16 navigational errors, and among supervisors there were nine navigational errors when attempting to enter a performance note. Interestingly, while non-supervisors used the QRG a relatively high 12 times, one supervisor only used it one time. The other categories featured fairly minimal levels of problem incidents.

The first 10 tasks, described above, related to the HPFD session and were completed by both supervisors and non-supervisors. The remaining eight tasks dealt with completing the ePerformance Appraisal document, and as such were only completed by supervisors. Overall, it

**Table 9. Task 10: Enter a performance note**

Problem Category	Non-Supervisors		Supervisors	
	Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions	Average Number of Incidents Per Session	Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions	Average Number of Incidents Per Session
Navigational error	16	2.28	9	2.25
User refers to QRG	12	1.71	1	1
User is timed out	4	1	2	1
User asks for help	3	1	1	1
User retries action because the system did not react the first time.	3	1.5	9	4.5
General button error	0	0	2	1
System or server error	3	1	0	0

is noteworthy among these tasks that there were much lower rates of problem incidences. Most tasks, including logging in to the NSIPS system with the test account, completing the Annual Performance Appraisal 1 document, checking ratings, spelling, and language, calculating ratings, and submitting the Performance Appraisal 1 document, had five or fewer incidents for even the most severe problem. This may be evidence of a learning effect after first completing the HPFD document. However, many supervisors did not complete the HPFD document and started with the ePerformance Appraisal.

Only one task among the ePerformance Appraisal activities had a significant number of problems. **Table 10** shows the results of Task 13, opening the Annual Performance Appraisal 1 document. There were 17 incidences of navigational errors opening the document, and one user asked for help. It is not surprising that users continued to have problems navigating through PeopleSoft to identify the appropriate performance appraisal document. The most frequent problems observed among the HPFD tasks were finding the HPFD document and finding the performance notes document. It appears that opening the performance appraisal was not much easier. Navigation within PeopleSoft is clearly a challenge to users. Users of ePerformance

Appraisal system would likely benefit from a QRG similar to the one developed for HPFD. The remaining ePerformance Appraisal system task details are presented in *Appendix B*.

**Table 10. Task 13: Open the Annual Performance Appraisal 1 document**

Problem Category	Supervisors	
	Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions	Average Number of Incidents Per Session
Navigational error	17	5.66
User asks for help	1	1

### 6.3 Focus Group Results

Focus group results were divided into the two main groups of study participants—supervisors and non-supervisors. In this report, comments are summarized in text, and the main qualitative themes and frequency of a comment are displayed in tables. Complete participant comments (color-coded to illustrate comments made at each data collection site) can be found in the appendices (supervisor quotes in *Appendix C*; non-supervisory quotes in *Appendix D*).

#### 6.3.1 Supervisory Personnel

Supervisory personnel at each of the three sites participated in focus group interviews and were asked about the phases involved in using the HPFD and ePerformance systems. Main themes and the frequency comments in each theme category are shown in *Table 11*.

NPC provided a CBT module to assist participants in understanding key terms and HPFD system features. The CBT consisted of a skills pre-test, a training module on how to use the HPFD CBT tutorial, and the HPFD CBT tutorial. The HPFD CBT tutorial consists of nine sections: HPFD Overview, Security and Account Creation, Human Resources Administrative Functions, Manager Functions, Employee Functions, Rating Categories and Target Behaviors, Performance Notes, Lesson Summary, and a Lesson Quiz. Usability testing participants were



**Table 11. Supervisory Personnel—Summary of Major Themes and Frequency of Comments for Each Phase of HPFD and ePerformance Process**

Focus Group Interview Topic	What Worked Well – Major Themes	Frequency	Opportunities for Growth – Major Themes	Frequency
Training and Reference Materials - CBT	General Satisfaction	5	Simplicity of Learning Process/Didn't Relay Document Navigation Information Clarity of Information Relevance	11 3 1
Training and Reference Materials - Quick Reference Guide	Usefulness of QRG	9	Availability & Accessibility Presentation of Information – Relevance	2 2
Logging Onto the System	Ease of Login (When System was Functioning)	6	Trouble Navigating to the Document Unclear Password Requirements	13 6
Selecting and Opening Your Document	Ease of Selecting the Document Facilitated by QRG  Document was Easy to Find	8  5	Login Failures Due to NSIPS Problems Trouble Identifying the Document Page Loading Terminology “Too Civilian”	6 5 1 1
Completing Your HPFD Form	General Positive Comments Performance Dimensions – Well Phrased HPFD Process Web-based Form Process Ownership	6 5 2 5 1	Paper Document Back-up NSIPS Problems Performance Dimensions – Repetitive & “Too Civilian” HPFD Process – Need for “Face to Face” Interaction Navigation and Process Clarification Needed Text Box Limitations Necessary	10 7 6 6 6 3
Completing Your ePerformance Form	Easy to Use  Form Design – Text Boxes for Each Performance Dimension & Overall Summary Block  Clarity of Performance Dimensions	2  6  3	Cultural Issues – Promotion Recommendation & Forced Distribution  ePerformance Process Concerns  Cultural Issues – Text Boxes Performance Dimensions – Repetitive & “Too Civilian”	7  7  6 6

**Table 11. Supervisory Personnel—Summary of Major Themes and Frequency of Comments for Each Phase of HPFD and ePerformance Process (continued)**

<b>Focus Group Interview Topic</b>	<b>What Worked Well – Major Themes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Opportunities for Growth – Major Themes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Closing your HPFD or ePerformance Session	General Positive Comments	2	Text Box Limitations Necessary Save and Complete/Forward Documentation Form Routing Paper Document Back-up Forced Distribution/Promotion Summary Recommendation Concerns Spell Check/Language Check	6 5 4 3 3 3 3
Other Concerns	Performance Notes	2	Workflow Concerns: First-level Rater & Form Routing Concerns About Procedural Fairness Implementation Concerns Forced Distribution Questions Connectivity Concerns Resistance to Change	10 8 6 6 6 1

asked to complete only the HPFD CBT tutorial in order to familiarize themselves with the functions of the HPFD system. When asked about the CBT, most participants expressed dissatisfaction with the CBT. The most frequently cited criticism of the CBT was a general lack of simplicity in relaying the information about the HPFD system. Some typical comments include “Learning objectives were not obvious; it provided a familiarity rather than describing how to use the system” and “CBT did not help me find the documents; it only helped with filling out the documents.”

As a result of comments in the first iteration of the study (i.e., “Sailors work from checklists—they’re used to that; the training should be set up like a checklist to work people through the training”), the research team developed a Quick Reference Guide (QRG) that included simple screenshots and caption boxes that illustrated where documents and key functions could be found. Supervisors generally found the QRG useful, citing that “this is [the QRG] critical” and that the “QRG is easy to understand.” Participants stated that the QRG could be improved if functions and critical features of the program were highlighted and presented in a sequential fashion that leads participants through HPFD and ePerformance tasks.

When asked about logging onto the system, several supervisors reported that it was an easy process when the NSIPS system was functioning. The NSIPS system had recurring interruptions in service, which led to a great deal of frustration among participants. Beyond the NSIPS system challenges, participants cited two aspects of the password change process that should be improved: making the password non-case sensitive and outlining the password requirements when first asked to reset passwords (i.e., one upper-case character, one-lower case character, minimum password length, special characters, and numeric characters). As one participant commented, “The rules for password generation should be published.” Frequently,

users learned that their passwords did not satisfy the password requirements only after several trial-and-error attempts.

Supervisors were then asked about their experience selecting and opening their HPFD and ePerformance documents. In the first iteration (without the benefit of the QRG), several users reported difficulty knowing where to find the HPFD or ePerformance document, but once found, the hyperlink to the document was easy to select. Eight of 13 comments describing problems finding the document (navigating the system) were from supervisors in Iteration 1: "...[W]here do I start once I get logged in? Navigation is not intuitive and system was not explained well in the CBT." Those supervisors in Iterations 2 and 3 who used the QRG indicated that it aided them in locating and completing the documents: "I used the [QRG] and whipped right through the process."

When completing the HPFD form, participants provided general positive comments: "The form was easy to complete and fill-in the block with comments; it was simple and efficient." The terminology used with the performance dimensions were "well organized and worded logically" and reflected "phrases I'd use in the written text of a FITREP [senior enlisted and officer performance appraisal] or EVAL [junior to mid-grade performance appraisal]." When asked for features of the HPFD system that could be improved, supervisors cited the lack of an electronic or paper back-up option, NSIPS system performance, the performance dimensions, and concerns with the HPFD process. Supervisors felt that a paper back-up copy would be helpful for as insurance against document loss in the event of a system failure, and so Sailors could work when Internet access is unavailable either due to the scarcity of computers aboard ship or when Internet access is limited while ships and submarines are at sea.

While the terminology used for the performance dimensions was mentioned as a positive feature of the HPFD system, several supervisors felt that the terminology was “too civilian” and that several of the performance dimensions seemed redundant. Additionally, concern about how the HPFD process would be implemented in a Web-based environment led to comments stating “I want to do a face-to-face counseling with Sailors first, complete the counseling document and send it to the Sailor for review, and they can call if they have any problems.” Participants at each testing site echoed this sentiment.

When describing their experience in completing the ePerformance document, supervisors reported that the Web-based form with text boxes for each performance dimension was easy to use and that “...a separate comment box for each behavior is ideal.” Also, participants said that the performance dimensions were clear and made it easier to rate workplace performance: “Each behavior description is a lot clearer, easier to rate people than NAVFIT98, and descriptions of anchors were good.”

Aspects of the ePerformance system that drew criticism were the absence of the reporting senior’s promotion recommendation (i.e., “forced distribution”), process concerns, concerns regarding the amount of and use of space in each text box, and the perception that several of the performance dimensions were redundant. Many of the comments pertaining to the promotion summary block more truly reflect questions about how the Navy will identify and compare individuals for promotion: “How will ‘top performers’ be given the opportunity to take an advancement test early?” Process concerns also reflected questions about how the current Navy performance appraisal process would be adapted to align with other Navy manpower and personnel processes (i.e., selection boards, detaching/special FITREPs/EVALs, and procedures

for Sailors to disagree with the performance appraisal and submit a statement contesting the appraisal).

When closing the HPFD or ePerformance document, several supervisors repeated concerns mentioned in previous phases of system use (i.e., electronic or paper back-up copies, text box limitations). Other concerns not previously mentioned included confusion between the “Save” and “Complete” buttons and questions pertaining to document routing and processing (“What is the final disposition of your ePerformance document?”). Users reported uncertainty as to what differentiated the “Save” and “Complete” functions. Several participants recommended a confirmation screen that asks system users to confirm their intent (i.e., “Pressing ‘Yes’ will save the document and forward it to your supervisor for review and processing.”).

Finally, participants were asked if there were any additional comments or concerns that they would like to convey. For supervisory Sailors, a number of implementation and process concerns emerged—at what level in the organization would the first-level rater be given the responsibility for the performance appraisal, the notion of the first-level rater’s comments remaining unchanged as the performance appraisal is routed up the chain of command, concerns of procedural fairness and grade inflation, and the impact of removing the reporting senior’s promotion recommendation.

Supervisors were then asked to sum up their experience by grading the system on a scale of 0 (low) to 4 (high). Scores for supervisors were below the scale mid-point with the NAS Brunswick supervisors rating the HPFD and ePerformance systems lowest ( $\bar{X} = 1.70$ ) and supervisors from Naval Base Kitsap – Bangor rating the system highest ( $\bar{X} = 2.25$ ; See *Table 12*). Factors contributing to subjective ratings include problems with the NSIPS system and interruptions in connectivity. Also, system users appeared to have a number of process-

related questions (i.e., workflow, who the first-level rater would be, and form routing) and implementation questions that could have negatively affected subjective ratings (See *Table 13*).

**Table 12. Supervisory Personnel—Overall Subjective Grade of HPFD and ePerformance Processes and Systems.**

Grading the System	Average Grade*
NAS Brunswick, Brunswick Maine	1.70
USS KITTY HAWK (CV63) Yokosuka, Japan	1.75
Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor Bangor, WA	2.25

*Note: Average Grade rated on a 0 (low) – 4 (high) scale.*

**Table 13. Supervisory Personnel—Overall Subjective Grade of HPFD and ePerformance Processes and Systems.**

Reasons for Grade	Frequency
NSIPS/Connectivity Concerns	12
Advantages over NAVFIT98	9
Clarity of Instructions and Procedures	5
System Design and Interface Improvements Necessary	5
Performance Appraisal Process Concerns	3
Internet Access	3
Administrative Burden	2

### 6.3.2 Non-supervisory Personnel

Similar to the procedure for supervisory personnel, non-supervisory personnel at each of the three sites participated in focus group interviews and were asked about the phases involved in using the HPFD systems. Sailors in non-supervisory positions were not asked to complete an ePerformance document, since supervisors are typically assigned with conducting annual performance appraisals. Participant comments were sorted into main themes for each phase in the document use and completion process. Main themes and the frequency comments in each theme category appear in *Table 14*.

**Table 14. Non-supervisory Personnel—Summary of Major Themes and Frequency of Comments for Each Phase of HPFD and ePerformance Process.**

<b>Focus Group Interview Topic</b>	<b>What Worked Well – Major Themes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Opportunities for Growth – Major Themes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Training and Reference Materials - CBT	General Satisfaction	1	Simplicity of Learning Process/Didn't Relay Document Navigation Information	11
			Clarity of Information	2
Training and Reference Materials - Quick Reference Guide	Usefulness of QRG	7	Presentation of Information – Include Buttons/Icons in QRG	1
Logging Onto the System	Ease of Login (When System was Functioning)	5	Unclear Password Requirements	10
Selecting and Opening Your Document	Ease of Selecting the Document Facilitated by QRG	10	Trouble Identifying the Document	1
			Trouble Navigating Through the Document	5
Completing Your HPFD Form	Performance Notes	4	Paper Document Back-up	4
	Process Ownership	4	Internet/NSIPS Connectivity	3
	Performance Dimensions – Well Phrased	2	Implementation Concerns	2
	Web-based Form	2	HPFD Process – Need for “Face to Face” Interaction	1
	General Positive Comments	1		
Closing your HPFD or ePerformance Session	Performance Notes	1	Save and Complete/Forward Documentation	5
			HPFD Process	5
			Paper Document Back-up	2
Other Concerns	Performance Notes	2	HPFD Process: Face-to-Face	5
			NSIPS/Internet Connectivity Concerns	4
			System Training Concerns	3



Much like their supervisory counterparts, many of these non-supervisory Sailors were asked to view the CBT and/or use the QRG. Non-supervisory Sailors reported that the CBT failed to simply and concisely review the background on HPFD and clearly present the learning objectives for the HPFD system: “Learning objectives not clear; need to simplify CBT.” System users also reported that terminology and acronyms could have been presented more clearly. Non-supervisory Sailors were provided with the QRG to aid in using the HPFD and ePerformance systems. For the QRG, most comments relayed general satisfaction with the guide: “After receiving the QRG, I could have written an HPFD document without a problem.”

When reporting on their experience logging onto the HPFD system, several participants reported that the login process worked smoothly. The vast majority of non-supervisory Sailors commented that the aspect of the login process that needed the most improvement was how a system user changes their passwords and how the password requirements are displayed. Similar to supervisory Sailors, non-supervisory Sailors would like to view that information at the same time that a replacement password is entered.

Non-supervisory Sailors reported that the QRG was useful in selecting and opening their HPFD document. Several participants reported dismissing the PeopleSoft terminology that appeared on the program’s navigation section, relying entirely on the information and screen-shots illustrated in the QRG. Half of those participants who had problems selecting and opening their document were non-supervisory Sailors from NAS Brunswick—the only site that did not have access to the QRG.

When using the HPFD system, non-supervisory Sailors relayed a sense of process ownership because the HPFD system allowed the user to examine their 5-Vector Model and identify specific performance dimensions for continued development in order to enhance their

careers. In conjunction with the notion of process ownership, users remarked that the performance notes feature appeals to them because they can track significant performance accomplishments throughout the year. The most frequently occurring recommendation to improve the HPFD was to include the capability for a printed back-up copy. Other recommendations for improving the HPFD system included placing an NSIPS server aboard ships and submarines so HPFD could be run off of the ship's or submarine's intranet. For surface ships, this is important since bandwidth for Internet traffic is limited, and aboard submarines, Internet connectivity is scarce.

When asked about concluding their HPFD session, non-supervisory Sailors noted challenges determining which button closed out the document: "... 'complete' button is too easy to confuse with 'save' button; 'complete' button needs a confirmation pop-up [to give additional directions]." Other comments cited echo concerns previously mentioned for a paper back-up copy of the HPFD form and hosting the NSIPS server on the ship's intranet to ensure system access.

Finally, participants were asked if there were any additional comments or concerns that they would like to convey. For non-supervisory Sailors, the notion of how the HPFD session would be conducted was of great concern. While there were differences in who would initiate the HPFD session (e.g., Sailor complete a self-assessment, supervisor complete a draft HPFD assessment), all agreed that a face-to-face performance feedback session ought to be included in the HPFD process to maintain personal contact with their supervisors. Non-supervisors were then asked to sum up their experience by grading the system on a scale of 0 (low) to 4 (high). Scores for non-supervisors were at or above the scale mid-point with the NAS Brunswick non-supervisors rating the HPFD and ePerformance systems lowest ( $\bar{X} = 2.00$ ), with ratings from

Naval Base Kitsap – Bangor rating the system highest ( $\bar{X} = 2.75$ ; see **Table 15**). Factors contributing to subjective ratings include a lack of instructions for system use and problems with the NSIPS system and interruptions in connectivity (See **Table 16**).

**Table 15. Non-supervisory Personnel—Overall Subjective Grade of HPFD and ePerformance Processes and Systems**

Grading the System	Average Grade*
NAS Brunswick, Brunswick Maine	2.00
USS KITTY HAWK (CV63) Yokosuka, Japan	2.17
Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor Bangor, WA	2.75

*Note: Average Grade rated on a 0 (low) – 4 (high) scale.*

**Table 16. Non-supervisory Personnel—Overall Subjective Grade of HPFD and ePerformance Processes and Systems.**

Reasons for Grade	Frequency
NSIPS/Connectivity Concerns	3
Clarity of Instructions and Procedures	4
Performance Appraisal Process Concerns	5
General Satisfaction	2

## **7 Summary and Conclusions**

### **7.1 Key Findings**

Taken as a whole, results indicate that the HPFD and ePerformance systems themselves worked well. User ratings of the system and qualitative data from focus group interviews indicate that system users believe the systems work well, with a majority of users reporting that the system “was neither easy nor difficult to use.” Unfortunately, the same proportion of users felt the system was “somewhat difficult to use” (23 percent) or “somewhat easy to use” (23 percent). Qualitative data from focus group interviews indicate that the frequency and severity of NSIPS connectivity problems had a significant negative effect on user perceptions of the HPFD and ePerformance systems. In spite of system connectivity problems, user ratings and feedback show promise for these systems still in the early phase of development.

While the goal of this usability study was to examine system usability, identify areas for concern, and form recommendations for revision, we uncovered additional usability concerns that play a key role in the successful implementation of the HPFD and ePerformance system. System connectivity (i.e., NSIPS problems and internet connectivity) and cultural/process concerns emerged as other features that warrant further attention. Unfortunately, we were unable to test other key system features in this phase of the study, namely document workflow.

#### **7.1.1 NSIPS and Internet Connectivity Concerns**

NSIPS connectivity and server downtime were significant problems for users in actually using the HPFD and ePerformance systems and completing assigned usability tasks (i.e., slow page-loading time, system timing out, passwords working inconsistently). Additionally, participant subjective ratings of their satisfaction with the systems indicate that these problems

negatively affected their satisfaction with the HPFD and ePerformance systems.

Recommendations to alleviate these problems may include:

- Placing NSIPS servers at the local command, ship, or submarine so that (1) information transactions can be completed on a local intranet before data are submitted via the Internet to the main NSIPS server, and 2) Sailors aboard any platform ship or submarine do not feel alienated and at a competitive disadvantage to shore-based Sailors in the performance appraisal process; and
- Addressing the problem of timing out by adding additional “save” buttons within the HPFD and ePerformance systems, creating an “autosave” function, adding a “timeout indicator” for the user to gauge time remaining until a system timeout, or re-setting the system timeout parameter to a reasonably large enough time value for users to complete and save their work.

### **7.1.2 Usability Errors**

There are a number of features within the HPFD and ePerformance systems that were identified as sources of error and frustration for system users. Making some simple corrections to the system could markedly improve the usability of the systems. Recommendations for action include:

- Adding a “Return to Document” button for returning to the main screen, minimizing the likelihood that users will use the browser’s “back” button to navigate the system;
- Simplifying and more clearly outlining the password change requirements when the participant is first asked to change their password;

- Clarifying buttons/icons by including descriptive verbal labels for “Spell Check,” “Save,” “Expand/Collapse All,” “Target Behavior Descriptions,” and “Complete” buttons;
- Adding a confirmation screen for the “Save” and “Complete” buttons that asks the user to confirm that “Pressing ‘YES’ will save and forward this document to your supervisor for processing”;
- Moving the “Search Documents” box below the “In Progress Documents” display so users avoid using the search feature in favor of using the navigation menu on the left-side of the system screen; and
- Creating a “Quick Reference Guide” with screen-shots and descriptive text boxes (to replace the CBT) that provide a step-by-step procedure for creating, completing, and approving HPFD and ePerformance documents.

### **7.1.3 Cultural and Process Concerns**

From the wealth of qualitative data gathered from usability study participants, a number of recurring themes highlighted cultural and process concerns users had with the systems. While the information participants had of the proposed revision to the Navy performance counseling and appraisal system varied among test sites, the following similar themes emerged:

- Include a hard-copy back-up of the HPFD and ePerformance document (e.g., an Adobe Acrobat Portable Document Format or PDF form) to (1) serve as a personal back-up in the event of a system failure and information/document loss, and (2) enable Sailors with limited online system access to develop HPFD or ePerformance input on a hard-copy form and then enter the data online when they have access to the system;

- Conduct follow-up focus group interviews to examine cultural issues related to the proposed new HPFD and ePerformance systems; determine at what level within the organization HPFD and ePerformance appraisals can be delegated; examine more closely the implications of the number and amount of text allowed for separate text boxes for each performance dimension, and evaluate the proposed period of performance counseling and appraisal based on report onboard date;
- Ensure that the HPFD and ePerformance systems are integrated into a Navy culture that encourages strong, personal and professional relationships between work-center supervisors and their subordinates, including as much personal, face-to-face interaction in the process as possible;
- Develop a communication plan that concisely outlines the rationale and benefit of proposed changes to the performance counseling/appraisal systems and that describes how data from the new HPFD and ePerformance systems will be integrated into Navy manpower and personnel processes (i.e., selection and advancement boards, personnel assignment, and distribution systems, etc); and
- Follow up with key process stakeholders on many of these cultural and process changes with a goal of identifying challenges and solutions for system implementation.

## **7.2 Limitations of research**

There are several limitations typical of usability studies including small sample sizes and generalizability/representativeness. First, a total of 57 Sailors participated in the usability testing across the three iterations. While this may seem like too few subjects from which to generalize, most usability studies test a much smaller group of subjects. Dolan and Dumas (1999)

recommend testing between five and 10 participants per iteration. The current study doubled the number of participants per iteration in order to get an adequate number of supervisory and non-supervisory Sailors testing the HPFD and ePerformance systems.

Second, because of the qualitative nature of this study, results are not representative of all Navy personnel. The study design does capture a meaningful representation of system users both in terms of demographic characteristics (i.e., race, gender, paygrade, geographic location) and workplace characteristics (i.e., supervisory and non-supervisory personnel, Navy warfare communities—aviation, surface, and submarine, administrative and non-administrative jobs).

Finally, most usability testing study designs call for an iterative approach in which revisions are made between iterations. This study was limited in the number and types of changes between iterations. The initial study design called for system modifications between iterations. During the first iteration of this study, the research team learned that this design aspect could not be accommodated.

### **7.3 Recommendations for future research**

Results from this study raise several questions that could be addressed through future research. First, while the recommendations from this study are likely to be incorporated in subsequent versions of the Navy HPFD and ePerformance systems, a small follow-up usability study may need to be conducted to confirm that changes made to the system indeed made it a more usable system—fewer NSIPS problems, decreased time spent on completing tasks, and increased satisfaction with the system.

Second, the next phase of this study would be to conduct a full pilot study where an entire command would complete the performance counseling and appraisal process using the HPFD and ePerformance systems. This study did not test the task from its true beginning—an e-mail



notification that a performance document needed to be created, creating the document, soliciting performance input, completing the input, and routing it through the unit/command for approval. A full pilot study would test the impact of conducting performance appraisals throughout the year (based on one's date of reporting to the command) versus the current system of conducting performance appraisals in certain pre-specified periods (e.g., one paygrade receives performance appraisals in September, another paygrade in October, and so on).

Finally, results from participant focus group interviews raised questions in terms of how the HPFD and ePerformance systems would be implemented (i.e., fear of a loss of personal contact between supervisor and subordinate using Web-based performance management systems, senior leadership's inability to have a strong influence on written text that substantiates a performance appraisal rating, concerns about the amount of space available for written text, and fears that this will burden those completing performance appraisals). These and other cultural concerns should be studied with focus group interviews with recommendations being incorporated into the final performance appraisal process.

## 8 Closing

This study provides information that will significantly improve the Navy's HPFD and ePerformance system and its implementation. As mentioned earlier, active participation in the performance appraisal process is a significant component of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and a likely factor in retention plans. Involving Navy personnel at each step in developing the HPFD and ePerformance system is crucial to stakeholder acceptance and buy-in. The development of the HPFD and ePerformance system involved Navy personnel from junior paygrades to senior leadership in the identification of supervisory and non-supervisory performance dimensions (Hedge, Borman, Bruskiewicz, & Bourne, 2002); identifying examples of workplace behaviors that reflect outstanding, average, and substandard workplace performance (Borman, Hedge, Bruskiewicz, & Bourne 2003); conducting focus groups among senior leaders to weight the various performance dimensions (Hedge, Bruskiewicz, Borman, & Bourne, 2004); and the current study that tested the usability of the HPFD and ePerformance systems. This "fleet-driven" approach will provide a more credible, usable, and likely more easily accepted process that is a vast departure from the current performance appraisal process.

While more work is required to further refine and test the HPFD and ePerformance systems, these systems represent a significant step forward in making a more objective and fair performance appraisal system. With all of the sacrifices military personnel make in their national service, they deserve a performance appraisal system that is fair, equitable, and easy to use. This reflects the CNO's emphasis on covenant leadership, "I see a Navy in which all our leaders are personally committed, first and foremost, to mission accomplishment... and second, to the growth and development of the people who are entrusted to us. This is part of the covenant—the promise—of leadership. And this is very important to me. I want every one of our jobs to be full

of meaning and purpose. I want every one of our people in the Navy to have a rich and meaningful experience” (Clark, 2001).

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**Appendix A**  
**Questionnaire Data**

## Pretest Survey

Fifty-seven participants completed the pretest survey.

Q1 How old are you?							
		Overall	%	Supervisors	%	Non-Supervisors	%
1	18-24	12	21.05%	2	5.71%	10	45.45%
2	25-34	25	43.86%	16	45.71%	11	50.00%
3	35-44	18	31.58%	16	45.71%	2	9.09%
4	45-54	2	3.51%	2	5.71%	0	0.00%
5	55+	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

Q2 What is your gender?							
		Overall	%	Supervisors	%	Non-Supervisors	%
1	Male	51	89.47%	31	88.57%	20	90.91%
2	Female	6	10.53%	4	11.43%	2	9.09%

Q3 Are you of Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino origin?							
		Overall	%	Supervisors	%	Non-Supervisors	%
1	Yes	4	7.02%	1	2.86%	3	13.64%
2	No	53	92.98%	34	97.14%	19	86.36%

Q4 What is your racial background?*							
		Overall	%	Supervisors	%	Non-Supervisors	%
1	American Indian or Alaska Native	3	5.26%	1	2.86%	2	9.09%
2	Asian	1	1.75%	1	2.86%	0	0.00%
3	Black or African-American	6	10.53%	2	5.71%	4	18.18%
4	Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
5	White	43	75.44%	28	80.00%	15	68.18%
6	Other	5	8.77%	1	2.86%	4	18.18%

\*The overall count is higher than 57 because several respondents reported multiple races.

Q5		What is the highest level of education you have completed?					
		Overall	%	Supervisors	%	Non-Supervisors	%
1	Less than high school completed/no diploma	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
2	Alternate degree, GED, homestudy, or adult-school certification	3	5.26%	1	2.86%	2	9.09%
3	High school graduate/diploma	15	26.32%	6	17.14%	9	40.91%
4	Some college, no degree	19	33.33%	11	31.43%	10	45.45%
5	Associate's degree or other 2-year degree	6	10.53%	5	14.29%	1	4.55%
6	Bachelor's degree	12	21.05%	12	34.29%	0	0.00%
7	Master's degree	1	1.75%	1	2.86%	0	0.00%
8	Doctoral or professional degree	1	1.75%	1	2.86%	0	0.00%

Q6		What is your current paygrade?					
		Overall	%	Supervisors	%	Non-Supervisors	%
1	E2-E3	7	12.28%	0	0.00%	7	31.82%
2	E4-E6	21	36.84%	7	20.00%	14	63.64%
3	E7-E9	16	28.07%	15	42.86%	1	4.55%
4	W1-W4	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
5	O1-O3	7	12.28%	7	20.00%	0	0.00%
6	O4-O6	6	10.53%	6	17.14%	0	0.00%

Q7		How long have you been in the Navy?					
		Overall	%	Supervisors	%	Non-Supervisors	%
1	<1	2	3.51%	0	0.00%	1	4.55%
2	1 - 5 yrs	18	31.58%	5	14.29%	13	59.09%
3	5 - 10 yrs	5	8.77%	3	8.57%	2	9.09%
4	10 - 15 yrs	16	28.07%	12	34.29%	1	4.55%
5	>15 yrs	16	28.07%	15	42.86%	1	4.55%



<b>Q8</b>	<b>How often do you use a computer at work?</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Never	1	1.75%	0	0.00%	1	4.55%
2	Sometimes, but not every day	7	12.28%	1	2.86%	6	27.27%
3	Every day, but not all day	24	42.11%	16	45.71%	8	36.36%
4	Most of my work is on a computer	25	43.86%	18	51.43%	7	31.82%

<b>Q9</b>	<b>How often do you use a computer at home?</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Never	3	5.26%	1	2.86%	2	9.09%
2	Sometimes, but not every day	33	57.89%	22	62.86%	11	50.00%
3	Every day, but not all day	21	36.84%	12	34.29%	9	40.91%

<b>Q10</b>	<b>I have a clear understanding of the present EVAL/FITREP system.</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Strongly agree	15	26.32%	13	37.14%	2	9.09%
2	Agree	34	59.65%	19	54.29%	15	68.18%
3	Neither agree nor disagree	3	5.26%	2	5.71%	1	4.55%
4	Disagree	3	5.26%	1	2.86%	2	9.09%
5	Strongly disagree	2	3.51%	0	0.00%	2	9.09%

<b>Q11</b>	<b>My last EVAL/FITREP was fair/accurate.</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Strongly agree	15	26.32%	12	34.29%	3	13.64%
2	Agree	34	59.65%	21	60.00%	13	59.09%
3	Neither agree nor disagree	7	12.28%	1	2.86%	6	27.27%
4	Disagree	1	1.75%	1	2.86%	0	0.00%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

<b>Q12</b>	<b>My last EVAL/FITREP was conducted in a timely matter.</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Strongly agree	12	21.05%	10	28.57%	2	9.09%
2	Agree	37	64.91%	24	68.57%	13	59.09%
3	Neither agree nor disagree	4	7.02%	0	0.00%	4	18.18%
4	Disagree	4	7.02%	1	2.86%	3	13.64%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

<b>Q13</b>	<b>I was able to submit my own input at my last EVAL/FITREP.</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Strongly agree	15	26.32%	14	40.00%	1	4.55%
2	Agree	36	63.16%	21	60.00%	15	68.18%
3	Neither agree nor disagree	4	7.02%	0	0.00%	4	18.18%
4	Disagree	2	3.51%	0	0.00%	2	9.09%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

<b>Q14</b>	<b>My last advancement/promotion recommendation was fair/accurate.</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Strongly agree	17	29.82%	15	42.86%	2	9.09%
2	Agree	35	61.40%	19	54.29%	16	72.73%
3	Neither agree nor disagree	3	5.26%	1	2.86%	2	9.09%
4	Disagree	2	3.51%	0	0.00%	2	9.09%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

<b>Q15</b>	<b>I am satisfied with the present Navy EVAL/FITREP system.</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Strongly agree	5	8.77%	4	11.43%	1	4.55%
2	Agree	26	45.61%	17	48.57%	9	40.91%
3	Neither agree nor disagree	16	28.07%	9	25.71%	7	31.82%
4	Disagree	10	17.54%	5	14.29%	5	22.73%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

<b>Q16</b>	<b>The most qualified and deserving Sailors score the highest on their EVALs/FITREPs.</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Strongly agree	5	8.77%	3	8.57%	2	9.09%
2	Agree	23	40.35%	16	45.71%	7	31.82%
3	Neither agree nor disagree	12	21.05%	9	25.71%	3	13.64%
4	Disagree	15	26.32%	7	20.00%	8	36.36%
5	Strongly disagree	2	3.51%	0	0.00%	2	9.09%

<b>Q17</b>	<b>Have you ever used a PeopleSoft software tool or interface?</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Yes	2	3.51%	2	5.71%	0	0.00%
2	No	37	64.91%	19	54.29%	17	77.27%
3	Don't Know/Not Sure	18	31.58%	13	37.14%	5	22.73%

<b>Q18</b>	<b>How easy or difficult do you think it will be to use this test version of the performance management system?*</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Very difficult	1	1.75%	1	2.86%	0	0.00%
2	Somewhat difficult	13	22.81%	7	20.00%	6	27.27%
3	Neither easy nor difficult	26	45.61%	17	48.57%	9	40.91%
4	Somewhat easy	13	22.81%	7	20.00%	6	27.27%
5	Very easy	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

\*Four participants did not feel comfortable answering this question.

<b>Q19</b>	<b>How efficient or inefficient do you think the performance management system will be?*</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Very inefficient	2	3.51%	1	2.86%	1	4.55%
2	Somewhat inefficient	8	14.04%	3	8.57%	5	22.73%
3	Neither efficient nor inefficient	22	38.60%	14	40.00%	8	36.36%
4	Somewhat efficient	21	36.84%	14	40.00%	7	31.82%
5	Very efficient	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

\*Four participants did not feel comfortable answering this question.

## **Post-Test Survey**

Fifty-five participants completed the post-test survey.

<b>Q1</b>		<b>How comfortable or uncomfortable did you feel performing the tasks in the test?</b>					
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Very uncomfortable	4	7.02%	0	0.00%	4	18.18%
2	Somewhat uncomfortable	19	33.33%	8	22.86%	11	50.00%
3	Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable	5	8.77%	3	8.57%	2	9.09%
4	Somewhat comfortable	19	33.33%	17	48.57%	2	9.09%
5	Very comfortable	8	14.04%	6	17.14%	2	9.09%

<b>Q2</b>		<b>How certain or uncertain are you that you completed the tasks successfully?</b>					
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Very uncertain	5	8.77%	1	2.86%	4	18.18%
2	Somewhat uncertain	13	22.81%	4	11.43%	9	40.91%
3	Neither certain nor uncertain	4	7.02%	3	8.57%	1	4.55%
4	Somewhat certain	23	40.35%	17	48.57%	6	27.27%
5	Very certain	10	17.54%	9	25.71%	1	4.55%

<b>Q3</b>		<b>Compared to other similar software you have used, how would you rate this performance management system in terms of ease of use?*</b>					
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Much more complicated	1	1.75%	0	0.00%	1	4.55%
2	Slightly more complicated	15	26.32%	6	17.14%	9	40.91%
3	The same	11	19.30%	7	20.00%	4	18.18%
4	Slightly less complicated	22	38.60%	17	48.57%	5	22.73%
5	Much less complicated	5	8.77%	3	8.57%	2	9.09%

\*One participant did not answer this question.

<b>Q4 Overall, how easy or difficult was the system to use?</b>							
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Very difficult to use	1	1.75%	1	2.86%	0	0.00%
2	Somewhat difficult to use	11	19.30%	4	11.43%	7	31.82%
3	Neither difficult nor easy to use	10	17.54%	7	20.00%	3	13.64%
4	Somewhat easy to use	28	49.12%	19	54.29%	9	40.91%
5	Very easy to use?	5	8.77%	3	8.57%	2	9.09%

<b>Q5 Overall, how easy or difficult was the system to understand?*</b>							
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Very difficult to understand	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
2	Somewhat difficult to understand	15	26.32%	9	25.71%	6	27.27%
3	Neither difficult nor easy to understand	6	10.53%	3	8.57%	3	13.64%
4	Somewhat easy to understand	24	42.11%	14	40.00%	10	45.45%
5	Very easy to understand	6	10.53%	8	22.86%	2	9.09%

\*Four participants did not answer this question.

<b>Q6 Overall, how professional or unprofessional did the system appear?*</b>							
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Very unprofessional	2	3.51%	1	2.86%	1	4.55%
2	Somewhat unprofessional	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	4.55%
3	Neither professional nor unprofessional	4	7.02%	1	2.86%	3	13.64%
4	Somewhat professional	24	42.11%	17	48.57%	7	31.82%
5	Very professional	24	42.11%	15	42.86%	9	40.91%

\*One participant did not answer this question.

<b>Q7</b>	<b>Overall, how efficient or inefficient was the system?</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Very inefficient	4	7.02%	3	8.57%	1	4.55%
2	Somewhat inefficient	9	15.79%	7	20.00%	2	9.09%
3	Neither efficient nor inefficient	11	19.30%	7	20.00%	4	18.18%
4	Somewhat efficient	20	35.09%	12	34.29%	8	36.36%
5	Very efficient	11	19.30%	5	14.29%	6	27.27%

<b>Q8</b>	<b>Overall, as you worked through the tasks, did the product become . . .</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Much harder to use	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
2	Somewhat harder to use	3	5.26%	3	8.57%	0	0.00%
3	Neither harder nor easier to use	7	12.28%	2	5.71%	0	0.00%
4	Somewhat easier to use	31	54.39%	22	62.86%	9	40.91%
5	Much easier to use	14	24.56%	7	20.00%	7	31.82%

<b>Q9</b>	<b>Overall, how effective or ineffective do you think the performance management system will be as a career development and career planning tool?*</b>						
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Very ineffective	2	3.51%	1	2.86%	1	4.55%
2	Somewhat ineffective	6	10.53%	3	8.57%	3	13.64%
3	Neither effective nor ineffective	8	14.04%	5	14.29%	3	13.64%
4	Somewhat effective	27	29.82%	19	54.29%	8	36.36%
5	Very effective	11	19.30%	5	14.29%	6	27.27%

\*One participant did not answer this question.

Q10		I have a clear understanding of the present EVAL/FITREP system.					
		Overall	%	Supervisors	%	Non-Supervisors	%
1	Strongly agree	3	5.26%	1	2.86%	2	9.09%
2	Agree	25	43.86%	15	42.86%	10	45.45%
3	Neither agree nor disagree	11	19.30%	6	17.14%	5	22.73%
4	Disagree	11	19.30%	8	22.86%	3	13.64%
5	Strongly disagree	5	8.77%	4	11.43%	1	4.55%

Q11		My last EVAL/FITREP was fair/accurate.					
		Overall	%	Supervisors	%	Non-Supervisors	%
1	Strongly agree	6	10.53%	2	5.71%	4	18.18%
2	Agree	33	57.89%	21	60.00%	12	54.55%
3	Neither agree nor disagree	14	24.56%	10	28.57%	4	18.18%
4	Disagree	2	3.51%	1	2.86%	1	4.55%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

Q12		My last EVAL/FITREP was conducted in a timely matter.					
		Overall	%	Supervisors	%	Non-Supervisors	%
1	Strongly agree	6	10.53%	5	14.29%	5	22.73%
2	Agree	29	50.88%	16	45.71%	13	59.09%
3	Neither agree nor disagree	16	28.07%	10	28.57%	6	27.27%
4	Disagree	2	3.51%	1	2.86%	1	4.55%
5	Strongly disagree	2	3.51%	2	5.71%	0	0.00%



Q13		I am satisfied with the present Navy EVAL/FITREP system.*					
		Overall	%	Supervisors	%	Non-Supervisors	%
1	Strongly agree	4	7.02%	2	5.71%	2	9.09%
2	Agree	28	49.12%	15	42.86%	13	59.09%
3	Neither agree nor disagree	14	24.56%	10	28.57%	4	18.18%
4	Disagree	5	8.77%	4	11.43%	1	4.55%
5	Strongly disagree	3	5.26%	2	5.71%	1	4.55%

\*One participant did not answer this question.

## **Appendix B**

### **Categorical Usability Data**

## **HPFD Session**

### **Task 1 - Complete the CBT Tutorial**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>		<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
User does not follow screen instructions	125	17.8	170	24.2
Tutorial button error	16	5.33	42	6
User asks for help	3	1.5	1	1
Navigational error	1	1	0	0

### **Task 2 - Log into NSIPS**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>		<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
User is not able to set new password.	21	3	16	2.28
User asks for help	7	1.16	11	1.57
System or server error	7	2.33	7	1.4
User refers to information sheet	3	3	1	1
Navigational error	2	2	0	0
User is timed out	1	1	0	0
User retries action because the system did not react the first time.	1	1	0	0

### **Task 3 - Open the HPFD document.**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>		<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
Navigational error	25	3.57	19	2.71
User refers to information sheet	21	3	14	2
User asks for help	8	1.14	7	1.4
System or server error	6	1	7	1.16
User retries action because the system did not react the first time.	5	1.66	1	1
User is timed out	0	0	2	1
User searches outside HPFD session	1	1	1	1
General button error	1	1	0	0

**Task 4 - Complete the HPFD document**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>		<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
User refers to information sheet	22	3.14	6	2
User asks for help	11	1.83	9	1.8
General button error	6	1.2	2	1
User is timed out	4	1	5	2.5
Navigational error	7	2.33	1	1
System or server error	2	1	0	0
User retries action because the system did not react the first time.	3	1.5	0	0
User searches outside HPFD session	2	2	1	1

**Task 5 - Check Spelling**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>		<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
User is timed out	10	1.42	13	1.85
System or server error	8	4	0	0
Spell check button error	5	1	4	1.33
User asks for help	4	1	2	1
User refers to information sheet	5	1		
User searches outside HPFD session	4	1	0	0
Navigational error	2	2	0	0

**Task 6 - Find the “Target Behaviors” description**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>		<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
User is timed out	8	1.14	9	1.28
User refers to information sheet	5	1	1	1
General button error	3	1	1	1
System or server error	2	1	0	0
User asks for help	3	1	1	1
Navigational error	0	0	1	1

**Task 7 - Change ratings and cut and paste comments.**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>		<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
General button error	0	0	6	6
User asks for help	3	1.5	2	2
User refers to information sheet	3	1	1	1
User searches outside HPFD session	3	1.5	1	1
System or server error	1	1	0	0
User is timed out	1	1	0	0

**Task 8 - Collapse all sections of the document**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>		<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
User is timed out	11	1.57	8	1.14
Navigational error	2	1	1	1
User refers to information sheet	2	1	1	1
User asks for help	3	1.5	0	0
User retries action because the system did not react the first time.	3	3	0	0
General button error	1	1	2	2
System or server error	1	1	1	1
User searches outside HPFD session	1	1	0	0

**Task 9 - Submit the HPFD document**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>		<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
User is timed out	6	1	7	1
Navigational error	0	0	11	11
User refers to information sheet	6	1	2	1
User asks for help	1	1	5	1.25
User retries action because the system did not react the first time.	1	1	4	4
General button error	0	0	1	1
System or server error	1	1	2	1
User searches outside HPFD session	1	1	0	0

**Task 10 - Enter a performance note.**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Non-Supervisors</b>		<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
Navigational error	16	2.28	9	2.25
User refers to information sheet	12	1.71	1	1
User is timed out	4	1	2	1
User asks for help	3	1	1	1
User retries action because the system did not react the first time.	3	1.5	9	4.5
General button error	0	0	2	1
System or server error	3	1		

## **ePerformance Appraisal Session**

### **Task 11 - Log into NSIPS using the ePerformance test account**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
User is not able to set new password.	2	2

### **Task 12 - Open the Annual Performance Appraisal 1 document**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
Navigational error	17	5.66
User asks for help	1	1

### **Task 13 - Complete the Annual Performance Appraisal 1 document**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
System or server error	4	1
User is timed out	2	2
User asks for help	1	1
User retries action because the system did not react the first time	1	1

### **Task 14 - Check the ratings descriptions for one dimension.**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
User is timed out	1	1
User refers to information sheet	1	1
Navigational error	1	1

### **Task 15 - Check spelling**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
User is timed out	2	1
Navigational error	1	1

### **Task 16 - Check language**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
User is timed out	5	1

**Task 17 - Calculate ratings**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
User is timed out	3	1
User asks for help	1	1

**Task 18 - Submit the Annual Performance Appraisal 1 document**

<b>Problem Category</b>	<b>Supervisors</b>	
	<b>Total Number of Incidents Across Sessions</b>	<b>Average Number of Incidents Per Session</b>
User is timed out	3	1.5
Complete button error	1	1
User retries action because the system did not react the first time	1	1
User refers to information sheet	1	1



## **Appendix C**

### **Supervisory Personnel: Main Content Themes and Comments**

II. Starting with the briefing that described the new HPFD and ePerformance plan. This was designed to give you a good overview of the new system and what features changed from our previous performance appraisal system.

a. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

**Theme  
Clarity**

**Quotes**

Clear-cut instruction/overview. Supervisors need to know much more about why we are changing to a new system and what the new features are than non-supervisors.

Relevant and critical that all personnel receive/have access to the overview. Most in group agree that all personnel should receive more background on how and why a new system is necessary.

Brief hit the highlights such that I was able to comprehend the system – briefing should provide basic information about “why I am here”

As an introduction, the overview served its purpose

Note: Participant Location Code is as follows: **NAS Brunswick, Brunswick, ME**; **USS KITTYHAWK (CV63), Yokosuka, Japan**; **Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor, Bangor, WA**.

- b. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

**Theme  
Forced  
Distribution  
Discussion**

**Quotes**

Forced distribution is good, but it could be better – seniority sometimes plays a bigger role in “FD” – the way to fix this is to give the “EP” to the guy who deserves it most, but realistically it is the guy who was there longest... “FD” is a motivating tool for my Sailors – competition is good to inspire better performance – when you walk onboard, you know who the “alpha dog” is and who you need to beat - we will have to overcome the current mind-set and become accustomed to using/interacting with the new system and it's way of recognizing behavior/performance

“FD” is good and bad – people fall victim to the “new guy on the block” syndrome

Did not see a “promotion recommendation” block

If you are trying to promote a person – you need to be able to say that you are trying to promote a person

**Wording  
problems –  
clarity and  
military feel**

Brief had a non-military feel which made it hard to understand

Overview needs to go into more detail

Needs more background information about SVM – if it is to be used as a manual/instruction

Need detailed instruction to understand why you are doing something

F – some terminology was unclear

**Process  
questions**

Brief did not explain what was broken about the old system – what are we trying to fix?

How are we going to integrate the new system with the old system records?

Supervisors need to know about the new system, but they need to know

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III. Now we'll talk about training and reference materials. These materials were designed to help familiarize you with the system and get you to the documents necessary to conduct your HPFD and ePerformance session [**SOME PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE A HAND-CARD, OTHERS WILL COMPLETE THE CBT**]

a. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

### **Quick Reference Guide**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Quotes</b>
<b>Usefulness</b>	I liked the QRG
	The QRG was very useful – most personnel will need this type of guidance
	Need a “quick reference” – this is critical
	Language, talent, experience barriers exist that will keep some personnel from effectively performing an HPFD/ePerformance session or complete the “paperwork” – some people write better than others. The Sailors with limited time and experience would benefit from a “Quick Reference Guide” – “We ‘go by the gouge’ – that’s the way we do most of our work out here.”
	Cheat sheet was used by 3 of 5 participants – recommended labeling it as a “Quick Reference Guide”.
	It was clear, but aimed toward computer illiterate user
	I needed the QRG – I would have been lost without it.
	Kids are computer literate and are more likely to understand the program quickly
	QRG is easy to understand

Note: Participant Location Code is as follows: **NAS Brunswick, Brunswick, ME**; **USS KITTYHAWK (CV63)**, Yokosuka, Japan; **Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor, Bangor, WA**.

### **Computer-based Training:**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Quotes</b>
<b>General Satisfaction</b>	CBT made the task simpler - good tool.
	Sorting tasks in Q&A is good – I liked how the numbers told you where to look
	CBT flowed well – The part where there were equations was hard to follow
	CBT is relatively straight-forward and helped me understand how the system works
	CBT was not bad, but there needs to be some additional refinement – CBT is helpful since I have never seen HPFD/ePerformance system before

Note: Participant Location Code is as follows: NAS Brunswick, Brunswick, ME; USS KITTYHAWK (CV63), Yokosuka, Japan; Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor, Bangor, WA.

- b. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

**Quick Reference Guide:**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Quotes</b>
<b>Availability &amp; Accessibility</b>	Did not know QRG was available  Quick reference was does not contain "in-line instruction"
<b>Presentation of Information - Relevance</b>	It would have been helpful to highlight functions and critical areas of the program  Did not initially know that quick reference guide was relevant
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	Getting to the document was the hard part – modifying the document was easy

Note: Participant Location Code is as follows: NAS Brunswick, Brunswick, ME; USS KITTYHAWK (CV63), Yokosuka, Japan; Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor, Bangor, WA.

## **Computer-based Training:**

### **Theme Clarity of Information**

#### **Quotes**

Acronyms were hard to understand – were not given clear definitions

Did not know where to look on the screen – too much to look at...member will have to filter too much info

CBT should be “dumbed” down. I didn’t know what to focus on.

Acronyms were too vanilla – needs more of a military feel to the tutorial.

The term supervisor/employee were confusing. We should use terminology that we currently use like Sailor, rater, senior rater, etc.

### **Relevance**

CBT did not cover big picture to explain the "why" & "when" specific functions are performed - need "good process overview"

### **Simplicity of Learning Process/Didn’t Relay Document Navigation Information**

Navigation functionality within CBT is not clear -

Learning objectives were not obvious. It provided a familiarity rather than learning how to use the system.

Not easy to discriminate between "learning objective" from "CBT framework" - what do I need to focus on in a given screen - text too small  
R&T: CBT did not help me find the documents – it only helped filling out the documents

Not "idiot proof" - inexperienced users may need specific steps

CBT is tedious (VERY boring) – I actually fell asleep during the CBT session - what is main focus in each frame of CBT – do I look at the study window (top) or do I look at the notes window (bottom) – hand-out (QRG) would be helpful

First, for the first 3 slides, I focused on the image of the computer screen. When I realized that nothing changed on those three screens, I noticed the text box on the bottom. It was really frustrating.

Move text box (bottom) to top – swap location of example with location of objective text

It looked detail, but it lacked simplicity -

Nothing worked as expected – scroll-bars, links, etc. display not react because it was static...

Sailors work from checklists – they’re used to that. The training should be set up as a checklist to work people through the training.

Include some real-world examples in the training that people can relate to.

Need integrity in training – accessibility will be critical – suggest a stand-alone system

## Miscellaneous

Daily progress updates should be done “face to face”

Recommended a classroom, interactive training rather than CBT. E-Learning puts shipboard Sailors at a competitive disadvantage because they don’t have the opportunity to check email daily, access computer terminals to complete work, and use the internet for training and professional development. “Being at sea is what the Navy is all about. Initiatives need to be designed for the at-sea people first and tested at sea and then move it to shore commands.”

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IV. Starting with logging onto the system. You needed to do several tasks – enter a username, password, and select the Navy Performance Management and Appraisal system.

a. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

Theme	Quotes
Ease of Login	I thought it was easy.
When	When the system is working properly – login is very easy
Functioning	3 of 5 who were able to log in did so with little difficulty.
	Login was smooth

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- b. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

**Theme**  
**Login Failures**  
**due to NSIPS**  
**Problems**

**Quotes**

The connection was very slow and we have a T3 connection here.

Very slow system access – it took too long to login. I would have given up and tried another time if this were for real.

Supervisor password not working

System kept dropping – 4 login attempts finally enabled me to access my HPFD document

Login failed – required workaround

Got kicked out of the system and was required to login again – it ended up working, but the “hiccup” was disconcerting

Need the faster internet connection – connectivity is going to be a show stopper – internet connection is unreliable underway

**Unclear**  
**Password**  
**Requirements**

Why is user name case-sensitive?

Why is my account name “case sensitive”? – I stumbled around the menu

Case sensitivity of user name and password was frustrating since there is no indication

User name should NOT be case sensitive

The rules for password generation should be published

Was not sure that password was successfully changed

**Miscellaneous**

No problems logging on.

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V. Now let's discuss selecting and opening your document. Here you are asked to identify the appropriate document, select, and open your document awaiting action.

a. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

**Theme**  
**Document Easy**  
**to Find and**  
**Select**

**Quotes**

Having the document link highlighted made the document easy to find.

Document readily available

Easy to operate system once you realize how everything works and where to locate information (it takes about 10 minutes to start becoming comfortable)

Easy to navigate

It was intuitive for me to look around like I look around in other new software programs I use. I work with computers all day long, so I'm used to doing that.

**Ease of Selecting**  
**Document**  
**Facilitated by**  
**Quick Reference**  
**Guide**

3 of 5 used the QRG to find and select their document

I used the QRG and whipped right through the process

Using the QRG made sense of the system

I used the QRG to help me get to my document

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- b. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

**Theme  
Trouble  
Identifying the  
Document**

**Quotes**

Where do I go to find a document?

Did not know what kind of document I was supposed to be looking for

What does "my document" mean - had to review someone else's document

What are all of the various menu option (links) there for – the link to pull up my document is not obvious

Putting the term "document" together with "evaluation" is difficult

**Trouble  
Navigating to the  
Document**

System navigation is unclear – where do I start once I get logged in? -

Navigation is not intuitive and the system was not explained well in the CBT

A: once logged in – how do I find the document? Starting off, I was lost. I looked for a "help button" but it wasn't there. The menu was not intuitive.

There were too many possible areas for me to get lost in. I'd recommend displaying only the options you are authorized to use.

Left side of the menu needs to be clearer - too many choices.

Functions not well defined. Reorganize critical tasks/functions and make more user-friendly.

Finding the document to open was difficult for all three. When asked what strategy users used to find and open documents, all said that they hunted around, clicked on links, found what they had access to, and looked for the documents.

I think there should be quick links that bring you either into the HPFD part or the ePerformance part.

Did not know where to locate document

Would probably use a search tool to find documents

Too many button clicks required to find the document. The opening page should take you right to the list of documents.

The menu system did not display an obvious "place-holder" when you expanded a menu option

First time through – function is not user friendly

Sub-menus are not clear and do not help me understand what it is I supposed to do – the quick reference guide cleared things up

**Page Loading**

Access is too slow - page loads too slowly - people likely to try reloading rather than wait

**Terminology Too Civilian**

The menus does not use military “flavored” wording causing the Sailor to make the mental jump to make sense of the “civilian” verbiage.

**Miscellaneous**

Task description did not line up with the activity of the task – required assistance from the study team to know where to start – menu titles were not intuitive.

Make sure the QRG is available

Search on social or last 4 of SSN rather than another number that replaces Empl ID

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VI. Let's talk about completing (filling in) your HPFD form. Let's list the aspects of completing the form – filling in the background information, completing the performance dimension, finalizing the form...

a. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

Theme General Positive Comments	Quotes Expanding the document – terminology – spell check – everything worked well and was easy to understand.
	<p>Overall – HPFD document was “to the point” in it’s implementation – the “comments” block helped to balance out the HPFD rating – the behavioral description was very helpful in focusing on the performance – comments in the document should be short/to the point and use your “face to face” to clarify your words</p> <p>HPFD and ePerformance felt different to me (which is good)</p> <p>There were no roadblocks. The form was easy to complete and fill-in the block with comments. It was simple and efficient. I liked the spell-check.</p> <p>I liked the spell-check</p> <p>Examples of required data and data descriptions are very helpful in completing the document</p>
Performance Dimensions	<p>Performance categories are in tune with today’s Navy</p> <p>Liked the words used in the verbal anchors. Phrases like “Walk the talk” ...those are things we say ...phrases I’d use in the written text of a FITREP or EVAL.</p> <p>Performance categories were well organized and worded logically The target behaviors and descriptors were very well worded.</p> <p>Where NAVFIT98 is vague – HPFD descriptors across behaviors are too verbose and have common themes – behavior descriptions need to be more direct</p>
HPFD Process	<p>Questions were asked about the HPFD process ... how frequent, what is the gameplan. Once described, [THE PARTICIPANT] liked that this system and process will facilitate more frequent and immediate feedback that will give Sailors the opportunity to make performance changes before the FITREP/EVAL is due to be completed.</p> <p>I like the email notification for late mid-term counseling sessions. It would be even better if your supervisor received an email when these are past due. Then the supervisor knows that their work center supervisor needs to get their counseling done – accountability.</p>
Web-based Form	<p>It was very intuitive. I liked the drop-down boxes. It’s hard to mess up with drop-down boxes.</p>

Easy to navigate from box to box

I liked the open-ended text box that I can use to help the Sailor improve

I liked the way each section was broken down

Able to select “rating” and make comments easily

**Process  
Ownership**

I also like the idea that junior Sailors are completing a self-assessment and sending it to their supervisor to review and provide feedback. This puts them in the position of having to be responsible for their careers early on. Many junior Sailors provide input and their supervisor writes their EVAL. Then when they become a Second Class, they are surprised to learn they have to write their own and other people’s EVALs. It also helps them work on their writing skills and get feedback early on, making them better writers.

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- b. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

**Theme**  
**Performance**  
**Dimensions**  
**Repetitive and**  
**“Too Civilian”**

**Quotes**

Some behaviors appear overlapping – when completing the form, I found myself thinking “I’ve already answered this one already”

Although it appeared that two sections were identical -

Trait descriptions have a civilian flavor and don't necessarily apply to military culture. Concerned that less educated Sailors will not be able to understand the workplace behaviors and the examples of high, average, and low performers.

Rewrite the traits so they have a military flavor

What type of comments are appropriate in the behavioral traits block? What kind of comments are expected? I would rather use the HPFD as a type of “brag sheet” – would like to see system put onto INTRANET to work around the Internet connectivity issue

“Military bearing” Sailors don't go outside to play anymore – they stay inside and play computer games – Sailor cannot pass PRT (this gets a 2.0), but shows up to work wearing a crisp uniform and shiny boots (this gets a 4.0) – there has to be some kind of compromise – what kind of score do you give him?

**HPFD Process**

Where does the document go – how is the document/information stored – who sees it? Do I need to hang onto a copy of the document (just in case I need to answer a Congressional) – can I hang onto a copy of the document??? Will a Sailor see the HPFD document before I have a chance to have a “face to face”?

HPFD should be face-to-face – eDocument is good CYA tool – but what is the liability?

I want to do a face-to-face counseling session with Sailors first, complete the counseling document and send it to the Sailor for review, and they can call if they have any problems.

Will a bright young Sailor be able to circumvent my opinion by writing something up prior to our “face to face” after reviewing his/her copy of my HPFD document?

Perform “face to face” prior to filling in a HPFD session to “document” a behavioral trend – if you take anything writing to a “face to face” simply use talking points and then document your comments

I would prefer to write up the document before having a “face to face”

**Paper Document**  
**Back-up**

Wants a “Save As” for a personal form – a back-up copy

Backup system – what happens the system fails



It would be good to have a back-up for the system. You will have a large number of people using the system and it may be tough to gain access. I'd like to have the ability to "Save As" and save a copy to my hard drive or a "Print Version" so I can work from a hard copy for those people who don't have computer access.

May explore having a "Print Version" that sends the document holder a PDF of the form for them to work from. Also have batch print versions of forms in one PDF so users can back up all documents at once.

I want to have a copy of the counseling document for my files and I want a copy of the counseling document to go to the Sailor's new supervisor when they transfer. That way Sailors who receive adverse counseling won't tear up that counseling sheet when they transfer.

Need a print version of the document

A printable form so Sailors can work from a paper copy and input their text when they have access to a computer.

Serves as a record of the session for tracking development, adverse counseling, and as a back-up copy.

It would be helpful to have a "hardcopy" of the HPFD output as a working copy when the internet is down – who sees/maintains these documents and how do I transfer ownership of these documents to a new supervisor – have supervisor hierarchy accounts be position based so that the underlying hierarchy is not destroyed when someone leaves...

I want a "hard copy" to back up the "soft copy"

## **NSIPS Problems**

Spell-checker and help button fails once the account "times out"

Spell-check did not work – the page expired – clicked link to "return to last active page"

"Complete" button did not work

Must save document if not complete – or you might lose your data

Dropped connections will cause personnel to "leave and come back" –

Pages froze up making it difficult to work with – could not see output due to "page timeout – i.e. Page not available error")

Pages kept "timing out" while I was working on the form – if HPFD function is only for "mid-term counseling" maybe we should scrap that concept and better incorporate (or modify) the ePerformance function to represent a "mid-term" session in a common location – big face-to-face option with a print option so you can take a piece of paper to the face-to-face session

## **Text Box Limitations**

No indication of system limitations – need a description of how far/how much information can be included in the text boxes.

**Navigation &  
Process Clarity  
Needed**

Limit the write-ups and focus on the traits – people will feel like they have to fill all the white space.

Limit the number of lines or require a certain number of line of text in comments block

Could not tell if HPFD is more of a “brag sheet” as compared to a genuine “self-assessment” – could not tell if I was performing a “mid-term counseling” or a “performance evaluation” – HPFD distinction from ePerformance is not clear

I’m just a dumb construction ogre. Just show me the tasks that I need to complete and what I need to do today.

I confused the HPFD and ePerformance documents

Conduct spell-check on all boxes as part of the save function

“Would like to spell check all at once

Make behavioral description more obvious – I did not know that I could expand/review the descriptions – add separate button/entry so that I can review behavioral traits

**Miscellaneous**

Need accountability on counseling – you should get paid if you get advanced – write-up should reflect “what have you done for the Navy lately?” how do you break out a Sailor

E5 and below does not have internet capability – we setup a computer lab, but only 5 computers have internet access that can be used and my section has over 100 personnel that will need to use these computers

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VII. Now, let's talk about completing (filling in) your ePerformance form. Some of you will complete a document for yourselves as the employee while others will be working on documents for those who work for you.

a. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Quotes</b>
<b>Easy to Use</b>	User friendly  Very intuitive system.
<b>Form Design - Text Boxes for Each Performance Dimension &amp; Overall Summary Block</b>	Space to make comments for each trait is sufficient to make proper comments. I like that each trait has a text box associated with it. The trait descriptors are so good I didn't feel like I needed to add text.  A separate comment block for each behavior is ideal  I liked the overview box. This would be a good place if someone wanted to send a message to the board.  Forced distribution is not a fair way of promoting a Sailor –  New system will be more fair because your qualifications – break down peer comparison to platforms  Text box is a valuable “reality check” that will help you better visualize/support a given performance rating. This will help raters to align their comment with their numerical rating while they're filling out the form.
<b>Clarity of Performance Dimensions</b>	Each behavior description is a lot clearer – easier to rate people than NAVFIT98. Descriptions of anchors was good  Trait descriptions are broken down very well - Descriptions of workplace behaviors helps to populate text.  Organizational Savvy is a wonderful behavioral trait – I liked the expanded trait descriptions... being able to pull up additional descriptive data to help you better understand a given behavioral category – this system will drive you to provide more feedback during the initial reporting period
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	SVM will fix the problem with forced distribution  Some participants did not complete a performance appraisal form due to technical problems  Switch over EVERYONE to 7-point scale at the same time to be fair H – I like the ability to hit “calculate” rating and then go back to make sure your numbers correlate with your comments before you confirm.

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- b. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

**Theme  
Performance  
Dimensions  
Repetitive and  
“Too Civilian”**

**Quotes**

Rating descriptor "does not meet standards" is too negative - would like "more constructive" verbiage in order to build a Sailor

“Target behavior” does not necessarily apply to military climate - they sound more "politically" oriented rather than "real world - in the trenches"

Behavioral descriptions will promote plagiarism for those folks who are not creative writers

Mission and one other trait overlapped too much

Trait description were too civilianized – they felt like “ego stroking” descriptions and not really relevant in a military environment

Would like to see a trait description for each level of performance... what does “low performance” look like as compared to “high performance”

**ePerformance  
Process  
Concerns**

Lowest appropriate supervisory level needs to perform and this person needs to know the employee - drop-down boxes and fill-in fields too impersonal  
Will there be a block for someone who does not agree with their evaluation?  
There will be a “I do not plan to submit a statement” box, but how would they submit a statement?

Force the rater to write a comment prior to assigning a number rating – this will provide the rater with an efficient logical progression with which to create a realistic evaluation

What happens with detaching FITREPS?

How will the new periodicity affect selection boards – would we go to a monthly board?

Combining access to “mid-term” with “FITREP” function

**Cultural Issues -  
Text Boxes**

System has potential for exaggerated performance evaluation – culturally, people will want to fill-in the white-space. Something is going to need to be done to keep people from gaming the system. The white space should be restricted to examples of why the person either exceeds or fails to meet performance standards.

Question was asked the number of characters per text box. YN1 stated it was 255 characters per box. Group thought that restricting the number of characters for each box might prevent raters from getting too “wordy or flowery” in their text.

There needs to be some limit on the amount of text for each of the workplace behaviors. We already have 18 lines and that is about right – maybe go to 25 total lines. Comments need to be concise.

Limit number of lines – 18 line limit – only write comment if you need to “justify” an extremely high or low rating

“I have two words for you, ‘Cause’ and ‘Effect’. What did someone do that contributed to the ship’s mission, helped out in town, etc.”

Unlimited text, but don’t penalize someone for not entering text. Use a “bottom-line” comment to summarize – use key word to indicate significant accomplishments

Use concise writing style -

### **Cultural Issues – Promotion Recommendation & Forced Distribution**

Forced distribution is necessary – justification comments should include only relevant supporting information. We have to have some way of racking and stacking people within a command. That would keep raters honest.

How will “top performers” be given the opportunity to take an advancement test early?

All: What about various recommendations? (retention, separation, thoughts for the future, advancement, seaman to admiral, etc).

How do you “break out” a Sailor – need a performance recommendation or discover a different way of “breaking out” a Sailor – a better way of “breaking out” Sailors must take specialties and communities into account (i.e. you cannot lump all pilots into the same group)

Will harder to distinguish a Sailor from his/her peers – not all Sailors have the opportunity to obtain your quals

Peer comparison is unfair because Sailors are not in the same situations

Human politics are going to be VERY difficult to overcome – the system must override the “good old boy network”

### **Miscellaneous**

File "save as" - does not trust career to be saved on a corporate server

Also, this is nit-picky, but one of the tasks asked me to cut and paste from one box to another. I put my cursor over the text, highlighted it and hit copy. It didn’t take because my cursor wasn’t right over the highlighted text.

Instructions at top of page were skimmed/ignored until I became confused and realized that I needed some guidance in order to complete the document

Perhaps we can “repeat” the instructions at the bottom of the page or put relevant instructions into a separate browser windowpane.

It would be good for this system to fall under the NKO login. You could login to NKO and have a link to either the HPFD or the ePerformance section. Right now we have so many logins and passwords, I have to keep a book with me because I have them all written down – NKO, NMCI, NALCOMIS (Maintenance Log system), and others. Your NKO login should give you access to HPFD and ePerformance.

Easy to use - raters tend to avoid harsh language to keep from "harming" a Sailor in front of a board - they don't know where a report will go and tend to inflate the "rating" rather than being "honest" - training is key to helping Sailors understand how to effectively use the system - push the "review"

down to the lowest appropriate supervisory level

HPFD gives the Sailor (subordinate) more ammo with which to challenge an evaluation

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VIII. Let's talk about wrapping up or closing your HPFD or performance appraisal session.

- a. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

Theme	Quotes
General Positive	ALL – say as much as you want for HPFD, but limit your comments when preparing an ePerformance appraisal
	New system is better in that it does not limit your evaluation to three or four sample bullets

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- b. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

<b>Theme Spell Check/Language Check</b>	<p><b>Quotes</b></p> <p>I would like to see a forced spell-check.</p> <p>“Spell check” was not easy to find – put a single button to allow the rater to run “spell check” prior to finalizing the document</p> <p>Language check does not do what you expect it to – I expected the button to check for bad words or grammatical errors – I would like the ability to create bullets to describe behavior rather than being forced to create formal grammatically correct sentences</p>
<b>Back-up Copies/Printable Version</b>	<p>I need a piece of paper – staring at a screen is difficult</p> <p>Paper is more comfortable when proofing a document</p> <p>Backup copy is necessary</p> <p>I would like to archive a copy of a HPFD document</p>
<b>Forced Distribution &amp; Promotion Summary Recommendation</b>	<p>Allow rater to say anything they want about each behavior – put top three highlights into the overall summary block... if the summary block doesn't “sell” the Sailor, you can go back to the behavior summary blocks for more info.</p> <p>The summary block should be used as a message block to talk to selection boards...</p> <p>Force the rater to pick the three most critical bullets</p>
<b>Form Routing</b>	<p>Routing options missing - what do you do with the document when you get done filling it in?</p> <p>Who will setup hierarchy? Someone in "personnel" (e.g. personnel officer) should fulfill this duty.</p> <p>How will changes in personnel duties affect the hierarchy - who will update the system? How easy will it be to update the system?</p> <p>What is the final disposition of your ePerformance document? What does the final product look like?</p>
<b>Save and Complete/ Forward Document Function</b>	<p>Add the word “forward” to the [complete] button or possibly create a pop-up confirmation window for those folks who accidentally click the complete button. This would help differentiate between closing the document and completing the document and forwarding it to your supervisor.</p> <p>Did not read the CBT to know that “hitting the [complete] button would route the document to the supervisor”</p> <p>Need a confirmation window to ensure you don't accidentally perform an action that you cannot undo</p>



I need “complete” button to be better defined – what is it’s function?

Function of “complete” button is not clear – what does it do – provide some instruction or make the button’s function more clear

## Text Boxes

Is there a limit to the number of lines you can enter in a block? What weights are being assigned to skill sets/billets/etc

Give the user a limited number of input and allow them to choose which textbox to put the text - (e.g. write your best 20 lines of text [to be shared by all behavior boxes] to express the Sailor’s accomplishments)

Distribute bullets across traits... use your limit of bullets as you see fit

Why limit the amount of text...write as much as you want

Some CO’s are long-winded and require you write more than is necessary – you must condense (limit) the amount of text or else you will fall back into the same situation we have now

CO’s say “white space” is bad – you have to fill up the space – limit each trait to a couple of bullets instead of having unlimited input capability – people write to justify a 5.0 Sailor even though it isn’t required

## Miscellaneous

Complete button failed – document “timed-out” – make the “complete button” function properly

Like saving a “draft” copy of these documents so I can go back later to complete/modify an incomplete performance document

On-line system is easy (for admin personnel) – not all personnel will have a PC available at any given moment

Disagreed with others that online time is limited. You think it is hard to come by, but if your supervisor and his chief knew that they were being rated by the number of complete documents forms from their people they would arrange to make time for you to be online.

Make an “auto save” feature that saves a document to your local machine/network or allows you to import a document from your local machine/network.

Program should be loaded locally and connected to the NSIPS server to upload your completed document for routing

Limit printed output of one page

System will ADD to our administrative burden – wording will grow so you *keep up with the Jones’* – I don’t want to have to justify every 7.0 rating

System is slow... pages load very slowly

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- IX. If you had to assign a grade to this system, what grade would you assign?  
(A=Outstanding, C=Average, F=Failed)
- What grade would you assign to this pilot system? What led you to assign this grade?
  - What, if anything, could be done to cause you to raise your grade of this system?

Group	Current GPA
NAS Brunswick Brunswick, ME	1.70
USS KITTYHAWK (CV63) Yokosuka, Japan	1.75
Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor Bangor, WA	2.25

**Theme**  
**NSIPS/  
Connectivity  
Problems**

**Quotes**

Too many problems – I kept getting kicked out of the system

I'd grade this an A for useability and a D for functionality

Less waiting time – slow connection was frustrating

The concept is noble, but the system was slow, it broke down, it was frustrating

The system was slow, account access was broken, not everything was accessible – I am not resistant to change, but I don't have a clear understanding of how the product looks when it is considered to be working properly. This is a radical change from what we used to – in the past, we made incremental changes, but not this time...

Connection is too slow – processing of data

Shore duty is rewarded by an online system. The message will get out that you won't be able to access e-learning programs and online systems aboard ship.

We are reliant on high-level technology that isn't currently available to sea commands – low-ranking Sailors do not have access to computers with which to perform the functions of the HPFD/ePerformance system. System is good in theory, but we aren't there yet. You must find a way to accommodate the college graduate as well as the naturalized citizen (who's second language is English)

Internet connection is the big show stopper here.

Internet issue – there are some things that can be improved, but overall – the product is pretty good.

Internet connection onboard ship is NOT suitable to support HPFD/ePerformance.

System timing out and problem understanding what I was doing / wording of within the system make things difficult

### **Internet Access**

I have limited access (maybe once a week) to a computer. Even getting more computer terminals wouldn't help. The time to get on a computer is limited for shipboard Sailors.

More manning could help free-up Sailors and supervisors to get onto computers. The mission of this ship is to launch birds and anything that detracts from that doesn't work for me.

Amount of computer time is going to be a problem. I'd like to have a paper form that I can hand to airmen to work on when they don't have computer access.

### **Administrative Burden**

A system that requires a lot of text to be written could turn into a "garbage in; garbage out" system in that if a Sailor does not take the time to provide good input – he may receive a poor EVAL because the supervisor doesn't take the time to do a proper EVAL because he received minimal input from junior Sailor. Also, we have other functions aside from administrative tasks.

Maybe you could have check-boxes by the rating dimensions. Less reliance on writing text.

### **Clear Instructions & Procedures**

Not easy - would be a C if CBT would have been completed prior to exercise

Must know system in order to make it work for you - remove extraneous functions to bring it up to a B or an A - incorporate a scheduling system - I need to understand the process

Training - explain how the system works and why we need to perform the required tasks - how is the new system different from our current system?

No instructions for the system – bugs in the system – the feedback was very frustrating since I did not know the system – system could use a Navy structure and language to make it easier for a Sailor to use

Needs better procedural instruction to make things better

### **Advantages to NAVFIT98**

Easier than NAVFIT98 - I just want the answer

Grade A – if everything gets fixed = grade F – if today's experience continues into final product

Current NAVFIT98 is a chore – HPFD/ePerformance is much easier – how will this tie into the big picture

Current system is too easy to lose track of deadlines and tracking accomplishments (brag sheet) – what is the time-frame for these changes?

Current NAVFIT98 is too work intensive – HPFD/ePerformance; much of the work is done for you – bugs need to be worked out or the system will be a disaster

	Product has serious potential...I'd say to go for it. It can't be worse than NAVFIT98
<b>Performance Appraisal Process</b>	<p>What are the "checks and balances" with regard to document routing. Would like to see who is the document holder in addition to the document status. Much like we see with the promotion board results.</p> <p>I'd like to see more about the process – how the document is routed – and the interrelationship of the performance appraisal with other systems like promotion boards, 5VM, advancement tests, assignment process.</p> <p>Omit forced distribution – make "overall comments" block available on every ePerformance document</p>
<b>System Incomplete</b>	<p>Too early to say – cannot evaluate an incomplete product</p> <p>Too early to say – incomplete product</p>
<b>System Design/Interface</b>	<p>It needs work in order to fix the flaws – I need to see more Would give a rating of "B" if HPFD/ePerformance is linked/based on NKO (no extra passwords). The whole idea of having a website is to have linked information. If we have a series of systems that don't have links, what's the point.</p> <p>Fix the user-friendliness issues (i.e. the Menu) to make the interface easier to use</p> <p>Save/load documents to/from local disk</p> <p>Distinguish HPFD from ePerformance by changing the color of the form</p> <p>Program does not utilize the entire screen – it would be better if I could see more on the screen – overall comment block should be reserved for reporting senior comments or add a reporting senior comment block – HPFD/ePerformance is a great starting point</p>

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Note: Participant Location Code is as follows: NAS Brunswick, Brunswick, ME; USS KITTYHAWK (CV63), Yokosuka, Japan; Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor, Bangor, WA.

- X. Is there anything that we haven't covered today that you feel is important to raise to this group for discussion of this pilot system?

**Theme  
Performance  
Notes**

**Quotes**

I really liked the notes section ... that was good.

I especially liked the performance notes section. That way people can quickly jot down thing that might go on their brag sheet before they forget.

**Workflow  
Concerns:  
First-level Rater  
& Form Routing**

How will document routing work for those for personnel external to NMCI?

How does the black box work - where do the documents go when you hit "complete"?

Work center supervisor should be in charge of his personnel and should be the one to make recommendations and write-up evaluations.

I have written evaluations that come back without reflecting my original opinion. My words have disappeared. I like a system that allows my comments to stick.

Needs checks and balances to ensure supervisor comments are not ignored – "Reject / Submit" button (i.e. "concur/non-concur")

Some folks are good writers and we should not expect/force personnel to take a writing class just to support the HPFD/ePerformance system

The work center supervisor has to learn to be a good writer eventually. They are going to be LPO, CPO, LCOP ... they're going to have to write and better to train them early.

The average Sailor will not care about failures in the system, because it will be up to management to figure things out and make them work - give Senior Rater guidance on how to rate Sailors – Senior Rater Average deviance will help break out Sailors and provide a level playing field – limit comments to top five bullets in each comment box – need reject/concur box to either accept or kick-back an eval

75% of Navy personnel transfer between June ~ August (for various reasons – kids going to school, etc) – the current system spreads the evaluation periodicity over the course of a year

You've got to allow senior raters (SCPO) to review a document to "head off a train wreck" before it happens (i.e. too many 7.0 ratings being submitted)

**Implementation  
Issues**

Training should take a minimum of 6 months to educate the entire Navy on new system - make sure everyone knows the consequences of executing the process correctly - time, money, quality (we'll get two of these)

Will lack of "administrative acumen" kill a Sailor's career?

How is "deployed" time weighted when compared to "homeport"

**Concerns About  
Procedural  
Fairness**

HPFD/5VM seems to be moving toward a “check list” rather than an objective opinion of my performance – what is most important at the end of the day

Make sure vectors are appropriately weighted to ensure a person’s promotability is properly evaluated and the Sailor does not merely become a number to complete a checklist. Leadership ability must be taken seriously or else junior Sailors can be poorly or mismanaged by a weak/ineffective leader.

How will this fit into the promotion system?

Where does this module exist? I’d recommend it as a stand-alone program within BupersAccess. However it happens, the end product must tie into NKO for 5VM

“Good old boy network” - new system will come-back 10-fold as some folks “beat the system”

Vetting process of ranking of Sailors in the “chief’s mess” is removed - what are we losing in the process?

Will the new system create a “reverse engineering” mentality in order to give a Sailor a score that will beat the system?

To beat the culture: advertise the new system – sign the instruction – need visualization of document life-cycle. A couple of weeks ago we had a Master Chief come up and describe the process ... that was really helpful.

CO’s will “fudge” rating numbers fit their view of a member’s ranking within their command (i.e. raters will still attempt to “rack & stack” within their command).

When the technology doesn’t support the requirement – some people might feel that their career (eval) may be rushed through – and that being onboard ship will hurt their career if they cannot utilize a required resource. You know you are going to have problems – so you may pre-complete a document or turn it in late

High rating scores are expected since you are penalizing your Sailors for being average when other CO’s are not... so you inflate those

Scores so everyone looks good – khaki does not automatically afford a Sailor with a specific level of knowledge and ability...a new chief doesn’t necessarily know how to rate a person’s performance

**Forced  
Distribution**

Forced distribution has draw-backs - does not see how the new system will highlight deserving Sailors - who should make Chief next year? How do I break out the “hot” Sailor?

Overview – must be provided in order for a CO to make a promotion recommendation – would like to see “overview” within HPFD tool

Removing “forced distribution” will cause rating number creep – I don’t see how you can force accountability to keep the numbers from creeping – limit comment boxes to 7 or 8 lines and the summary block should be limited 15 to

18 lines –

Getting rid of FD is good since the 5VM provides a better model/formula for “racking & stacking”

You need FD for E6 & below because it promotes competitiveness within a command and provides feedback to the Sailor saying “you are top-performer and we think you should be promoted early”

There is are some ratings where a member’s qualifications are “classified” and cannot be displayed on their 5VM

### **Resistance to Change**

Users tend to wait for deadline - let's use old system until someone yell's at us. We hate change.

HPFD is new – we fear change – let’s use the old system, because it works – the majority will wait until the last minute

### **Connectivity Concerns**

Folks are having serious connection / timeout problems with NKO – training will be required to get people used to the new system – new folks will have trouble filling up comment boxes -

Currently NAVFIT98 is maintained on the local LAN and then transmitted once the boat pulls into port – you won’t be able to sell the idea of “not being able to change a document in midstream” – dropping an 80% solution on the fleet without education will be a BIG mistake

As connectivity capability increases, we will be better able to transmit/receive at sea

At sea connectivity will require an UNCLAS net – system must be NMCI compliant – on-line Performance notes are a good thing and will keep you from forgetting daily accomplishments – the document must be a living document in that you must be able to continuously chop a document until it is done – training/documentation MUST be in place long before the fleet will be able to utilize an 80% solution

ZIP files are not allowed by NMCI email system

Will require a local server onboard to be able to “push/pull” while at sea

### **Miscellaneous**

Who gets to read your performance notes? Junior personnel are sometimes grammatically challenged and will tend to over-inflate their own performance.

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## **Appendix D**

### **Non-supervisory Personnel: Main Content Themes and Comments**



II. Starting with the briefing that described the new HPFD and ePerformance plan. This was designed to give you a good overview of the new system and what features changed from our previous performance appraisal system.

c. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

**None**

d. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

**Theme**  
Clarity

**Quotes**

The briefing needed to be condensed, more direct, to the point, less complicated. Focus on the tasks that you're going to be doing. Save the discussion of features for the end.

Question: will the tutorial be part of the system/instruction? Note: The comments for the briefing text should be considered when writing the instruction – concise, to-the-point, simple, easy to follow.

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III. Now we'll talk about training and reference materials. These materials were designed to help familiarize you with the system and get you to the documents necessary to conduct your HPFD and ePerformance session [**SOME PARTICIPANTS WILL RECEIVE A HAND-CARD, OTHERS WILL COMPLETE THE CBT**]

c. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

### **Quick Reference Guide**

#### **Theme General Satisfaction**

#### **Quotes**

The write-up described to system concepts well

The QRG is more valuable than the tutorial – if I had to choose, based on “time availability” with a PC, I would choose a QRG, because I don’t have time to sit through a tutorial

QRG should be called an “Information Map”

“Quick reference” guide is outstanding – simple guidance is better in that you get clear, concise steps to perform a task

After receiving the quick reference guide - I could have written a HPFD document without a problem

4 of 4 used QRG

Used QRG to find documents and buttons

Note: Participant Location Code is as follows: **NAS Brunswick, Brunswick, ME; USS KITTYHAWK (CV63), Yokosuka, Japan; Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor, Bangor, WA.**

### **Computer-based Training:**

#### **Theme Clarity**

#### **Quotes**

CBT was laid out in logical manner

Note: Participant Location Code is as follows: **NAS Brunswick, Brunswick, ME; USS KITTYHAWK (CV63), Yokosuka, Japan; Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor, Bangor, WA.**

- d. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

### **Quick Reference Guide:**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Quotes</b>
<b>Include Icons in QRG</b>	Include a list of the icons and what they stand for.

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### **Computer-based Training:**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Quotes</b>
<b>Clarity of Information</b>	Wording of the tutorial could be better  Too many abbreviations to memorize at once
<b>Simplicity of Learning Process/Didn't Relay Document Navigation information</b>	I seemed to keep reading the same thing over and over – the tutorial was too confusing – should be able to navigate the tutorial to find specific information rather than try to cram the entire text into memory  I need a better overview before I just go into the features of the system  Make the instruction more concise – shorten the instruction where possible  Getting through the process the first time is difficult  It took a while to grasp the concepts being presented and required some coaching  I don't necessarily need to know why I press a button, just tell me what to do  CBT was overwhelming – too much information being put-out  CBT not logical  Learning objectives not clear – need to simplify CBT  Too many slides with too much information – break down information into logical sections – integrate CBT with “hands-on” to reinforce learning or have it integrated with the system (e.g., links from CBT to live system)  Need to add “prep” – what are the learning objectives?

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IV. Starting with logging onto the system. You needed to do several tasks – enter a username, password, and select the Navy Performance Management and Appraisal system.

a. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

Theme	Quotes
Ease of Login When Functioning	Logging in is straight forward
	Changing my password worked well
	Logged in by the staff

Note: Participant Location Code is as follows: NAS Brunswick, Brunswick, ME; USS KITTYHAWK (CV63), Yokosuka, Japan; Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor, Bangor, WA.

b. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

Theme	Quotes
Password Requirements	Password reminder would be helpful for those folks who tend to forget/misplace passwords
	System is lacking guidance for acceptable password entries when “changing your password”
	Logging on took a long time
	4 of 4 had concerns with the number of passwords they needed to have
	Either make the system so that you log in once and have access to all systems (e.g., MyPay, NKO, BOL, NMCI) or make the password requirements (one upper case, one lower case, one alphanumeric, etc) the same so one password would work for each system
	Use SSN (already being used by NKO, MyPay, and BOL) – as long as system is “secure” – If someone wanted to steal your identity, there are a lot easier ways of getting it than breaking into a government website

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V. Now let's discuss selecting and opening your document. Here you are asked to identify the appropriate document, select, and open your document awaiting action.

c. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

**Theme**  
**Ease of Selecting**  
**Document**  
**Facilitated by**  
**Quick Reference**  
**Guide**

**Quotes**

Once you get to the document folder, the document was easy to find – there was no guessing involved as long as the QRG was available – the tutorial combined with the QRG make the process VERY easy to understand.

4 of 4 – used the quick reference guide to navigate the system

Really didn't pay too much attention to the PeopleSoft terms on the left side of the document console because they went right to the QRG.

I had to refer back to the QRG to help me find the document folder

This is where I used my QRG.

Note: Participant Location Code is as follows: NAS Brunswick, Brunswick, ME; USS KITTYHAWK (CV63), Yokosuka, Japan; Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor, Bangor, WA.

d. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

**Theme**  
**Trouble Finding**  
**the Document –**  
**Identification**  
**Trouble Finding**  
**the Document -**  
**Navigation**

**Quotes**

There is no clear initial indication as to where documents are stored.  
There is too much information on the left side of the screen

Did not know the contents of each menu item – had to perform search in order to find the HPFD document

Guidelines – session path – taskbar buttons for major tasks

I clicked through every option on the left side before I found the performance document

I wished I had a QRG (Note: Participant had a QRG but did not refer to it)

Breakdown functions more logically

Note: Participant Location Code is as follows: NAS Brunswick, Brunswick, ME; USS KITTYHAWK (CV63), Yokosuka, Japan; Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor, Bangor, WA.

VI. Let's talk about completing (filling in) your HPFD form. Let's list the aspects of completing the form – filling in the background information, completing the performance dimension, finalizing the form...

c. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

Theme	Quotes
<b>Performance Dimensions</b>	<p>Performance dimensions were well thought out and easy to understand – I like them better than the current system – the new dimensions more easily lend themselves to rating performance on “everyday” Navy jobs</p> <p>Behavioral descriptions worked well. Terminology was not too civilian and well understood by all.</p>
<b>Web-based Form</b>	<p>Text box should be available to keep accomplishments from fading from memory</p> <p>I like being able to select an “honest” appraisal of my performance with the option to map a path to improve where you are weak – I like the “text box” associated with each behavioral category</p>
<b>Process Ownership</b>	<p>I like being able to provide input - “counseling” is typically an afterthought and generally a “pencil whip” document that has no value and give no performance redirection</p> <p>Useful – I can focus on the areas where I want to improve without being distracted by extraneous behavioral traits</p> <p>HPFD will tie into 5VM and help improve a Sailor</p>
<b>General Positive</b>	<p>Once you find the document – there is not whole lot to it. This was the easy part – the hard part was finding the document.</p>
<b>Performance Notes</b>	<p>I like the IDP functionality and Performance notes</p> <p>“Performance notes” is a great idea. Right now we keep accomplishments in a green notebook. It would be nice to be able to document those at the end of the day or week.</p>

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- d. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

Theme	Quotes
<b>HPFD Process</b>	<p>Don't document sensitive items – some things should stay between the supervisor and the Sailor. We'd discuss those things informally or put it on a counseling sheet first.</p> <p>All: 1) so the supervisor could provide their input and have something for the Sailor to review face-to-face first, make any necessary revisions, then finalize with a printed form that Sailors sign, and 2) in the event the server is down or you don't have Internet connectivity because you're on patrol.</p>
<b>Document Back-up: Paper Copy/Printable Version</b>	<p>All – wanted a printed document</p>
<b>Internet/NSIPS Connectivity</b>	<p>For the off-crew, a web-based system would work fine. Nearly everyone has the capability of getting on the Internet.</p> <p>Currently, we get as much admin work done as possible prior to going on patrol. Otherwise, we work from a printed form and input it once we return.</p> <p>To make this work aboard submarines on patrol, you'd need a NSIPS server aboard the sub that people could work from. Once the sub comes in, then there'd need to be a way to connect that server to the Internet, since we currently don't have non-secure connections for the Internet. All of our computers aboard the sub are secret/classified.</p>
<b>Implementation Concerns</b>	<p>Too much time/information for HPFD -</p> <p>The Fleet would need a period of training to use the system and become familiar with it before it went live – like the Fleet beta testing we're using for the FSM (financial management system) prototype we're using.</p>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<p>“Spell Check” button should be easier to find/identify (e.g. create a button with the word “spell check”)</p> <p>It might help to have examples like “Completed ____ man-hours of ____ in this period.”</p> <p>Behavioral traits are well fleshed out – trait text should remain separate in a printed format</p>

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VII. Now, let's talk about completing (filling in) your ePerformance form. Some of you will complete a document for yourselves as the employee while others will be working on documents for those who work for you.

c. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

N/A

d. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

N/A



VIII. Let's talk about wrapping up or closing your HPFD or performance appraisal session.

- c. Which aspects worked well – what about it made you feel that it worked well?

Theme	Quotes
<b>Performance Notes</b>	“Performance notes” is a good place to put comments about daily performance accomplishments between HPFD/ePerformance sessions. “I can put down my OJT and other things I do on my job there to remember.”

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- d. Which aspects could stand improvement - what about it didn't work for you and what would help?

Theme	Quotes
<b>Save and Complete/Forward Document Function</b>	“Complete” button is too easy to confuse with “save” button – “complete” button needs a [confirmation popup]  Re-label the “complete” button to avoid confusion as well as routing incomplete documents  Performance notes should have been one of the first options you could pick from  Combine HPFD document and Performance Notes documents
<b>Back-up Copies/Printable Version</b>	What kind of contingency plan is there – what if the HPFD/ePerformance system fails (virus, server crash, etc)? You'd need a paper backup.  Having a paper copy would allow you to print documents off and bring them around for pen and ink changes and enter them into the online document when you have access.
<b>HPFD Process</b>	Face-to-face will cut out “document ping-pong”  ALL – host HPFD/Performance Notes system on Ship's Intranet
<b>System Access</b>	Online time is difficult to come-by.

Note: Participant Location Code is as follows: **NAS Brunswick, Brunswick, ME**; **USS KITTYHAWK (CV63), Yokosuka, Japan**; **Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor, Bangor, WA.**

- IX. If you had to assign a grade to this system, what grade would you assign?  
(A=Outstanding, C=Average, F=Failed)
- c. What grade would you assign to this pilot system? What led you to assign this grade?
- d. What, if anything, could be done to cause you to raise your grade of this system?

Group	Current GPA
NAS Brunswick	2.0
Brunswick, ME	
USS KITTYHAWK (CV63)	2.17
Yokosuka, Japan	
Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor	2.5
Bangor, WA	

Theme	Quotes
Clear Instructions & Procedures	<p>It was a D until I got used to the system. Need contextually based tutorial so I can look up specific information about the system.</p> <p>The QRG would bring the score up to an “A”</p> <p>System/tutorial needs to be concise because of high-tempo onboard</p> <p>Making the system easier and more simplified would bring the score up to an “A”</p>
NSIPS/ Connectivity Problems	<p>The system seemed adequate, but the system needs to be fixed – provide better tools to understand system – troubleshoot and fix areas of confusion (see notes above)</p> <p>With the bugs currently encountered</p> <p>Not a complete product</p>
Performance Appraisal Process	<p>Process is too loose – if system becomes a 1-2-3 process –</p> <p>Less computer time – reduce reliance on PC to perform the HPFD function. Paper-copy back-up will help facilitate face-to-face discussions.</p> <p>Spend more face-to-face time instead of sending emails back and forth.</p> <p>Cut out some of the process – there is too much time being spent on the computer – reduce the “ping pong” so the Sailor can be productive instead of sitting at a computer.</p> <p>Streamline the process. We need to reduce the amount of time we’re on the computer and in order to spend time doing our jobs.</p>
General	<p>The hardest thing was getting into the document, the rest was easy</p>

**Satisfaction**

The document was easy to use.

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- X. Is there anything that we haven't covered today that you feel is important to raise to this group for discussion of this pilot system?

Theme	Quotes
<b>HPFD Appraisal Process</b>	<p>Fill out a paper HPFD, do a face-to-face, then go back and enter the document into the computer</p> <p>Complete HPFD &amp; route to member, member does self-assessment, do face-to-face with member, create IDP, finalize the document</p> <p>Supervisor provides inputs to subordinate – do self-assessment – face-to-face – finalize</p> <p>Those with non-administrative jobs did not like the need to route documents via email/system to review, approve, edit, review, approve. Too much work and will require everyone to be continually checking their email – But, if that's what Navy leadership requires, we'll have to get onboard.</p> <p>Do not like the idea of a distributed workload – E3/4/5 will not necessarily know how to effectively evaluate/mentor someone below them</p>
<b>NSIPS/Internet Connectivity</b>	<p>NKO – Question about how NSIPS will work aboard ship if within NKO if ships don't have NKO. Have a NKO server aboard ship with NSIPS and do a push/pull when updates and information bursts are necessary.</p> <p>NKO would be a reasonable location for HPFD/ePerformance system</p> <p>System needs to be implemented onboard – since internet connectivity is not easily maintained</p>
<b>System Training Concerns</b>	<p>CBT – needs an index of terms for help on specific topics rather than going through an entire chapter of the tutorial to get refresher training on how to accomplish one specific task</p> <p>Put the QRG as a resource document on the website.</p>

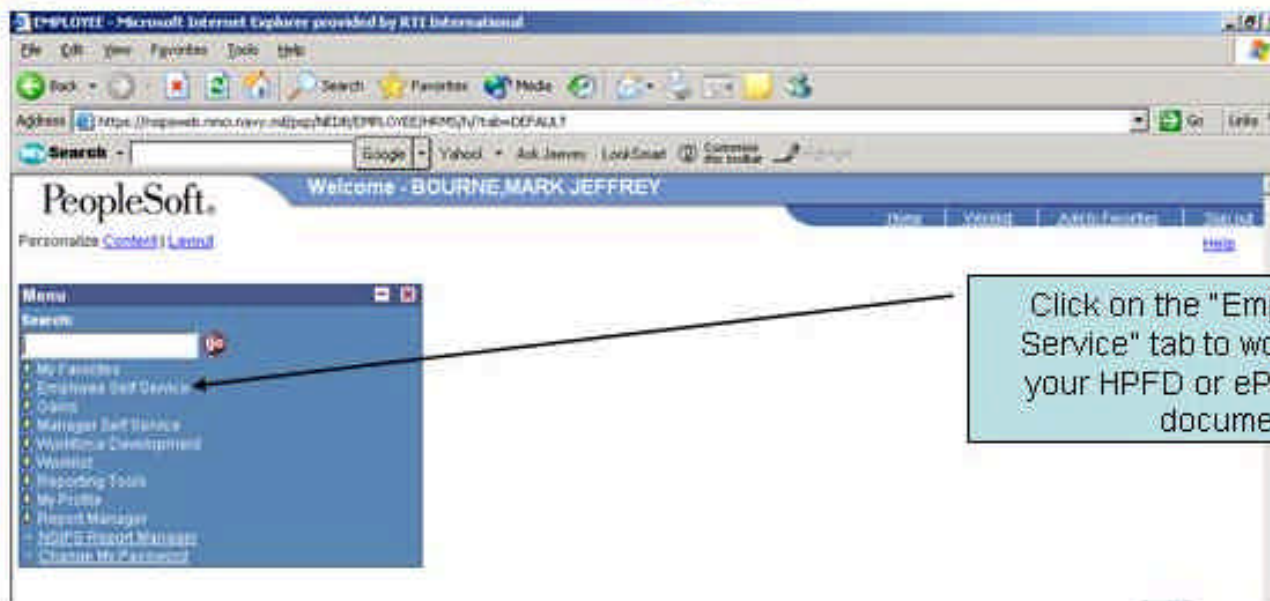
Note: Participant Location Code is as follows: **NAS Brunswick, Brunswick, ME**; **USS KITTYHAWK (CV63), Yokosuka, Japan**; **Kitsap Naval Base – Bangor, Bangor, WA**.

## **Appendix E**

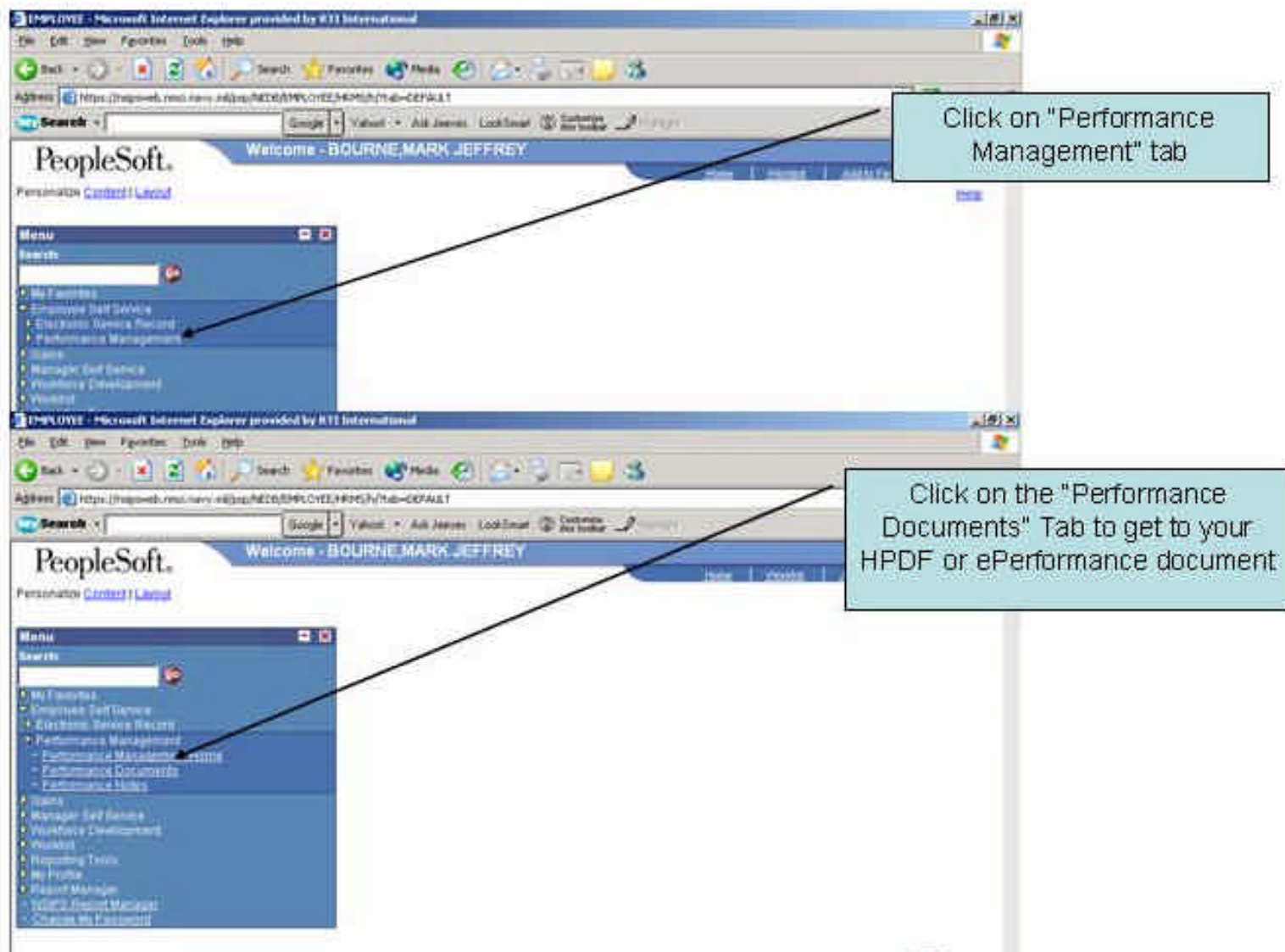
### **Quick Reference Guide (QRG)**



Please enter your username and password



Click on the "Employee Self Service" tab to work on either your HPFD or ePerformance document



Click on the highlighted link for the document you're going to be working in





Performance Documents - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by HFI International

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Address [https://hrqirevels.zend.havy.mil/csp/NEO/EMPLOYEE/PT\\_EDB/ROLE\\_EMPLOYEE/EP\\_APPR\\_SELECT.GBL?NAVSTACK=Clear](https://hrqirevels.zend.havy.mil/csp/NEO/EMPLOYEE/PT_EDB/ROLE_EMPLOYEE/EP_APPR_SELECT.GBL?NAVSTACK=Clear)

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- Performance Management Home
- Performance Documents
- Performance Notes
- Training
- Manager Self Service
- Workforce Development
- Worklist
- Reporting Tools
- My Profile
- Report Manager
- HR/HR Shared Manager
- Change My Password

### Maintain Performance Document

MARK BOURNE

The document status is Completed.

Performance Document	
Document Type:	HPFD Session
Document ID:	393
Author Type:	Employee
Template ID:	HPFDISUPR
Author:	MARK BOURNE
Employee ID:	3331650
Begin Date:	12/18/2001
Due Date:	06/17/2002
End Date:	06/17/2002
Document Status:	Complete
Job Title:	Med Service Corps Off
Paygrade:	O4

[Expand All Sections](#) [Collapse All Sections](#)

Performance - Supervisor

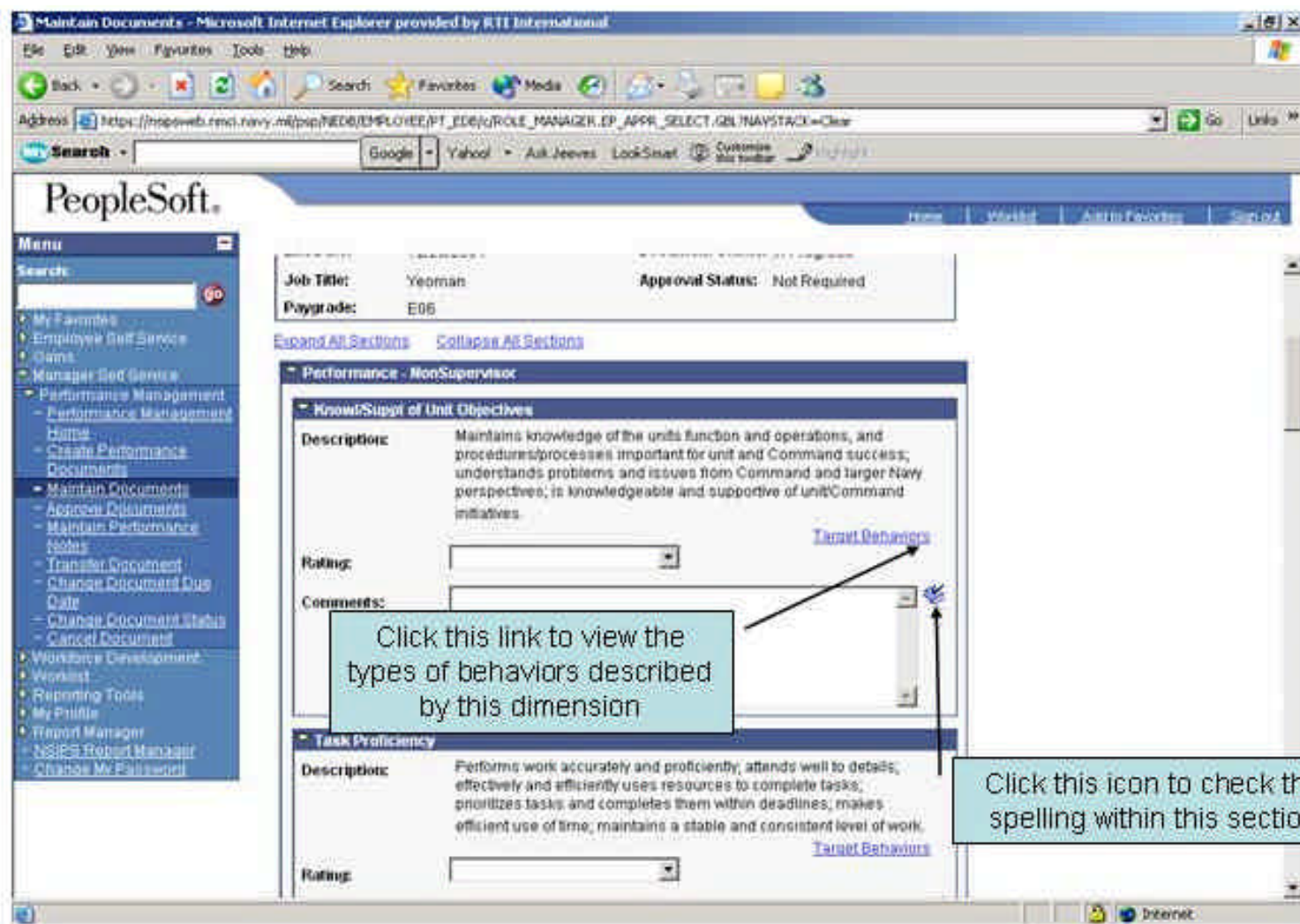
[Return to Performance Document Selection](#)

Go To: [Employee Home](#)  
[Performance Management Home](#)  
[Performance Notes](#)  
[Printable Performance Document](#)

Click on this link to view and enter text in all sections

Click on this link to close all the sections

Done Internet



Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by RTI International

Address: [http://hspweb.navy.mil/jsp/PERFORM/EMPLOYEE/EMPL/ROLE\\_MANAGER/EP\\_APPS\\_SELECT.GBL?NAVSTACK=Clear](http://hspweb.navy.mil/jsp/PERFORM/EMPLOYEE/EMPL/ROLE_MANAGER/EP_APPS_SELECT.GBL?NAVSTACK=Clear)

Search:

# PeopleSoft

**Menu**

Search:

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- Home
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  - Performance Management
    - Performance Management Home
    - Create Performance Documents
  - Maintain Documents
  - Appraise Documents
  - Maintain Performance Notes
  - Transfer Document
  - Change Document Due Date
  - Change Document Status
  - Cancel Document
  - Performance Statistics
- Managing Home
- Recruiting
- Workforce Development

**Author Type:** Manager

**Author:** MARK BOURNE

**Begin Date:** 01/01/2004

**End Date:** 07/12/2004

**Job Title:** LDO-Administration

**Paygrade:** 04

**Employee ID:** 3258075

**Due Date:** 07/12/2004

**Document Status:** In Progress

[Expand All Sections](#) [Collapse All Sections](#)

- Performance - NonSupervisor
- Overall Comments

[Check Language](#)

[Calculate All Ratings](#)

[Save for Later](#)

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[Performance Management Home](#)

[Performance Notes](#)

[Printable Performance Document](#)

[Career Planning](#)

Click this link to calculate all the ratings

Click this link to make sure you have used appropriate language

Click this link to save your entries for later

Choose this link to save your entries and submit your supervisor

Start | 2 Microsoft... | Maintain... | Adobe Acr... | 3 Microso... | Microsoft P... | P550 (n R... | Microsoft E... | 1:15 AM



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**EMPLOYEE** 07/11/2004 **DOCUMENT STATUS:** in progress

**Job Title:** LDO-Administration

**Paygrade:** O4

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**Performance - NonSupervisor**

**Know/Suppl of Unit Objectives**

**Description:** Maintains knowledge of the unit's function and operations, and procedures/processes important for unit and Command success; understands problems and issues from Command and larger Navy perspectives; is knowledgeable and supportive of unit/Command initiatives.

**Rating:** [Dropdown] [Rating Descriptions](#) **Numeric Rating:** 0.00

**Comments:** [Text Area]

**Task Proficiency**

**Description:** Performs work accurately and proficiently, attends well to details, effectively and efficiently uses resources to complete tasks; prioritizes tasks and completes them within deadlines; makes efficient use of time; maintains a stable and consistent level of work.

**Rating:** [Dropdown] [Rating Descriptions](#) **Numeric Rating:** 0.00

When completing HPFD, Choose this link to view the description of each rating

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